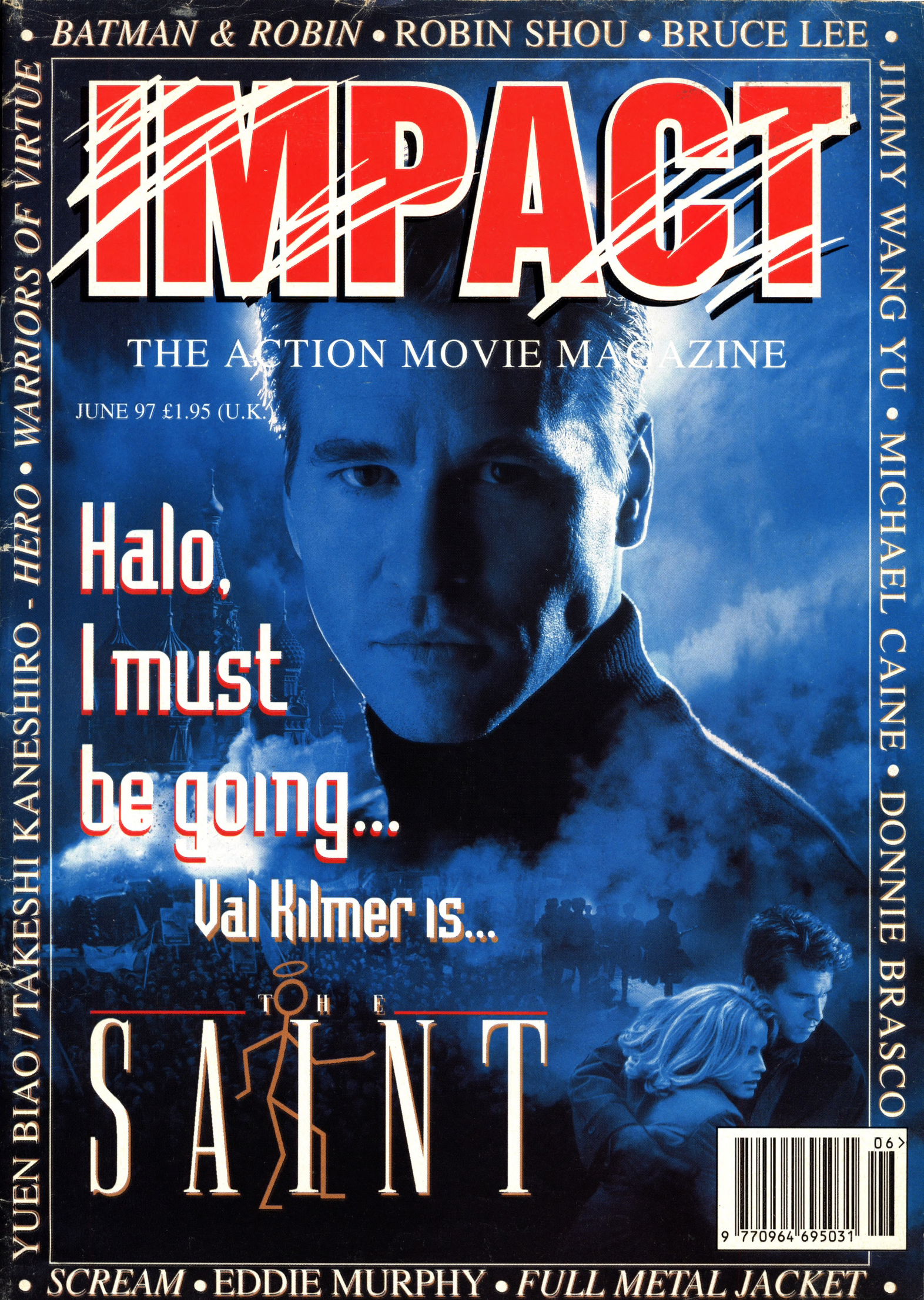
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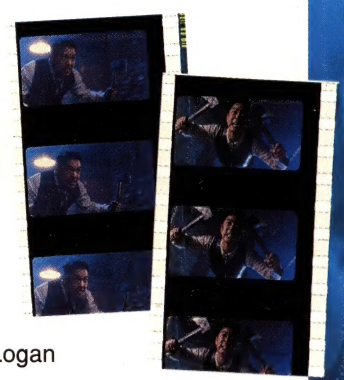
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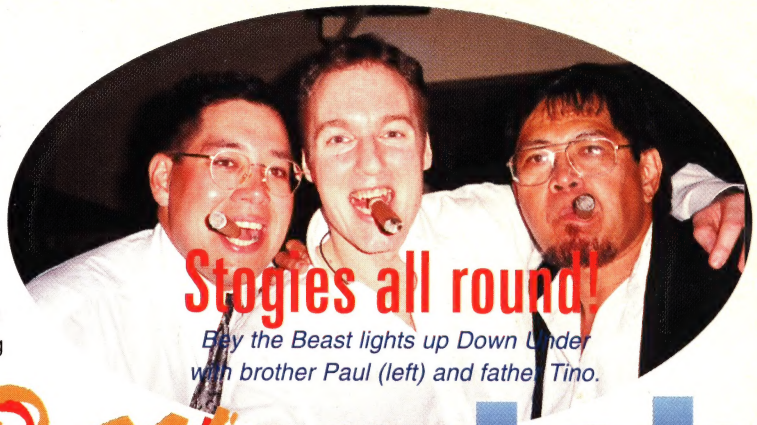
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Stogies all round!

Bey the Beast lights up Down Under with brother Paul (left) and father Tino.

Bey watch

Imagine you couldn't read this column. Not that you chose not to, in your haste to get to all the really great stuff *Impact* has to offer this issue. Imagine that you simply *couldn't* read it, that it was just a sheet of squiggles. Until recently, I figured that everyone in the (supposedly) English speaking world could read. On my last trip to my second home down under, I encountered a remarkable man on a remarkable mission. Reverend Alfreddie Johnson is an ordained Baptist Minister, accomplished rock drummer and the head of the World Literacy Campaign, a movement that aims to solve a worldwide problem that has yet to receive sufficient attention. The WLC has been setting up centres in American inner cities aimed at providing those in need with a chance to benefit from a revolunationary teaching system devised by scientology founder L.Ron Hubbard. Joining Rev.Alfreddie on his crusade is soul king and sometimes action star Isaac Hayes. Blaxpolitation fans will remember Isaac from his musical contribution to 1971's *Shaft*, the grand-daddy of the genre, and his performance, opposite Star Trek star Nichelle Nichols in *Truck Turner*. In recent years, Hayes has starred in *Escape From New York* and lampooned the blaxploitation genre in *I'm Gonna Get You, Sucka*. Now, he's added his firepower to the energy Alfreddie Johnson brings to his cause. If you want to help, or just find out more about this issue, you can fax the Reverend in L.A. at 310 5372139. Tell 'em Bey sent you.

On the same trip to Melbourne, I got the chance to see *Barefoot Kid* and *Saviour Of The Soul* star Aaron Kwok in concert (something that, strangely, I'd never think of doing in Hong Kong!) Aaron, who can dance up a storm, rocked the house, and The Ponnmeister and myself were lucky enough to be invited backstage to meet him after the show. He revealed that, though he was planning some films based on the Bruce Lee classics, he wouldn't dare to impersonate The Little Dragon in them. While in Oz, I was delighted to see that so many great Hong Kong movies were available in mainstream video outlets. It's no I wonder that *Impact* is so well-received in Australia!



Hanging with the Barefoot Kid!: Rob Meister (left), Ponnie Logan, Aaron Kwok, Bey Logan.

While in Oz, I went to see the re-released version of one of my all time favourite movies, *Star Wars,* and I have to say that I was underwhelmed. Not with the basic film (which still beats ninety percent of the subsequent s-f flicks for sheer entertainment value) but rather with the much hyped additional footage created for the film via George Lucas' pet passion, digital imagery. I think I speak for everyone in the audience over the age of six when I say "Huh?" Far be it from me to say that the emperor has no clothes but, as the finale of *Species* proved, computer generated images suck. Whatever happened to stop-motion? It might be old-fahioned and expensive, but it had life. I thought the digitally superimposed Jabba The Hutt looked like one of those pseudo-animated creatures the Monty Python used to drop into a skit at will. Ditto the other creatures carved into the celluloid. Seeing these additons to Star Wars, I was reminded of Prince Charles' observation that the new wing of the National Gallery looked like a carbuncle on the face of an old friend (and I fully expect my comments above to arouse similar ire).



Our own Andy Staton and Mike Lambert get to grips with each other in front of the Hong Kong skyline.

On my return to Honk Kong, I found that it seemed to have been declared Brit Week. Our own Andy Staton was in town, with his good friend Eric Luk, and the two of them have some hot Bruce Lee projects in the works which you'll be able to read about first (of course!) in the pages of *Impact* and *M.A.I.*. Also in Hollywood East was Made In Hong Kong's Alain De La Mata, on his ongoing mission to bring the best in Chinese action cinema to the U.K.. I was very happy to have the chance to spend time with all of the above.

Bey Logan. (editor)

word up

Back In Business



The latest from underrated action star Brian *One Tough Bastard* Bosworth is the long-awaited semi-sequel to his debut, *Stone Cold*. Originally entitled *Heart Of Stone*, it's now called *Back In Business*. Bosworth's long time confidante, Gary Wichard, produced the flick...

Lightspeed

Having his *Kung Fu: The Legend Continues* series cancelled and failing in his bid to head the Screen Actors Guild, David Carradine is back on the lethal low-budget trail with the futuristic *Lightspeed*...

Scorpio One

Martial arts star Jeff Speakman boldly goes in search of a new genre for the science fiction film *Scorpio One*. It's a First Contact type tale, which revolves round a space shuttle crew's encounter with aliens...

Die Hard-on-the-space shuttle

A script in development at Universal, *Ignition*, boldly takes the lone hero genre where it's never gone before: outer space. It's *Die Hard*-on-the-space shuttle, with the courageous shuttle commander taking on his foes after suffering a broken leg. Names suggested for the lead range from Bruce Willis-lookalike Jerry *Babylon Five* Doyle to Harrison Ford.

Reservoir Dogs **Chris (Nice Guy Eddie) Penn and Michael (Mr. Blonde) Madsen are reunited in *Paper Trail* (which is a pretty tame name for a film starring two tough guy actors). Madsen is also back on the screen, in his *Free Willy*, rather than *Dogs*, mode in *Diving With Turtles*....**

Former teen idol C.Thomas Howell is fast becoming a fixture on the American B movie action scene. His recent releases include, *Dead Fire*, a s-f flick set in the world of 2064, and a contemporary thriller entitled *Sleeping Dogs*...

Michael 'The Dude' Dudikoff is set to star in his first Western, *The Shooter*. The former *American Ninja* stars opposite Country and Western superstar Randy Travis. (incidentally, wasn't *The Shooter* also the title of a recent Dolph Lundgren flick?). Dudikoff is also set to star in a *Firefox*-style hardware flick entitled *Black Thunder*...

Against The Law **is a vaguely familiar title with a vaguely familiar cast. *Above The Law* was the U.S. title of Steven Seagal's debut, and *Against The Law* star Nick Mancuso appeared in The Tall Guy's subsequent *Under Siege* movies...**

Olivier Gruner is set to shoot *Mercenary 2: Thick And Thin* for producer Avi Nesher. The plot revolves around a soldier for hire travelling to a South American jungle to rescue a rich man's wife...

Her feline role

Rumour has it that Michelle Pfeiffer cameos as *Catwoman* in Warner Bros highly hush hush *Batman And Robin*. This fulfills her contractual obligation to reprise her feline role, and may make the possibility of her starring in a Tim Burton *Catwoman* movie less likely...



Last To Surrender

Latest from former WWF-er Rowdy Roddy Piper is *Last To Surrender*. He plays an American cop teamed with a Chinese martial arts master. The gung fu guy concerned is *Iron And Silk* star Pan Qing Fu...

Johnny Blade



While *Mortal Kombat 2: Annihilation* rumbles towards theatres, former Cannon firer Sam Firstenberg is hard at work preparing a *Mortal Kombat* spin-off. *Johnny Blade* will star Linden Ashby as the same dilettante martial arts movie star he played in the original film...

The first female Crow?

Despite the disappointing box office return of *City Of Angels*, a *Crow 3* movie being mooted. It would feature the character of Sarah, established in the previous films, as the first female Crow. A TV series is also in the works....

French speaking fight star

AWOL helmer Sheldon Lettich, who also wrote the Van Damme hit *Bloodsport*, is teamed with another French speaking fight star for *Perfect Target*. *Bloodsport 2 & 3* hero Daniel Bernhardt stars alongside former Freddie, Robert Englund and B movie regular Brian Thompson...

Jedi Knight



Liam Neeson is rumoured to be up for a role as a Jedi Knight in the first of the new *Star Wars* fims, *Performers*: in the running for the part of the young Obi-wan Kenobi are Kenneth Branagh and *Trainspotting* star Ewan McGregor...

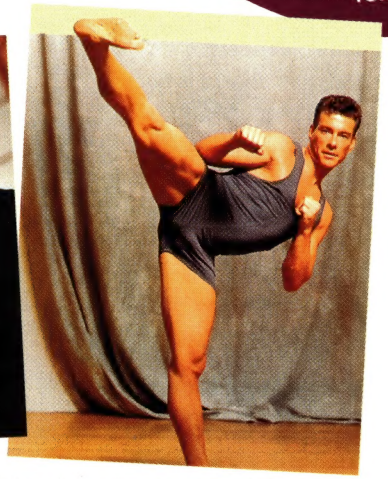
THE LIGHTNING ROD

KNOCK OFF

The Van, Tsui, Hung and Jet Show?

Jean-Claude Van Damme must have enjoyed his time on *Double Team* (previously *The Colony*) with director Tsui Hark. Van The Man is set to work for the cult Hong Kong helmer a second time on *Knock Off*, which is to be filmed in Hong Kong. Word is that Samo Hung, fresh from his directing gigs on *Once Upon A Time In China And America* and *Mr. Nice Guy*, will be the choreographer, and that Jet Lee will appear in a supporting role. The film will star JCVD as a designer jeans dealer forced to contend with an international conspiracy. The production will use the actual handover ceremonies between





Van versus Jet?: Stranger things have happened out East...

Great Britain and China as a backdrop. *Knock Off* is scripted by *Die Hard* screenwriter Steve de Souza.

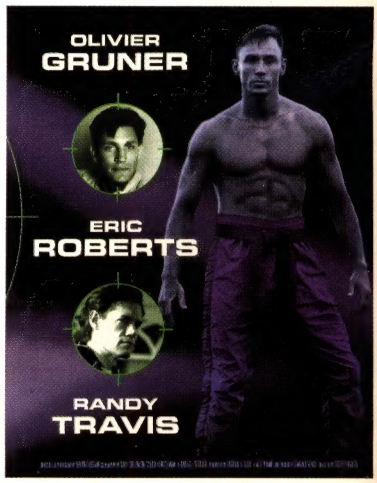


DACASCOS MEETS FORMER REPLICANT IN REDLINE

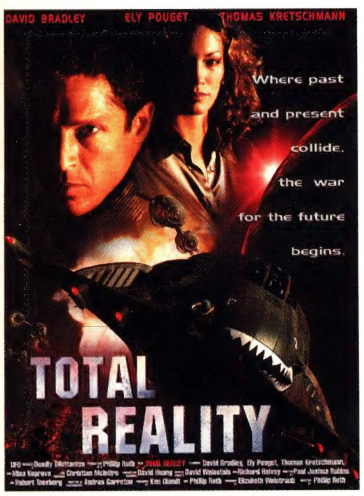
Rutger Hauer, so good in *Blade Runner* and *The Hitcher*, so bad in virtually everything recent, gets top-billing in Nu World's futuristic thriller *Red Line*. The youthful Mark Dacascos sports a moustache and goatee for his co-starring role in the flick.

KICKBOXING GOES COUNTRY FOR TNT

Olivier Gruner may be a little bit rock and roll, but his co-star in *TNT*, Randy Travis, remains very much country. The film also features *Best Of The Best* star Eric Roberts. As the tag line ('Once you're in, there's no way out') indicates, the script is not a million miles from that of Van Damme's *Double Team*, which was itself an homage to the classic *The Prisoner* TV series.



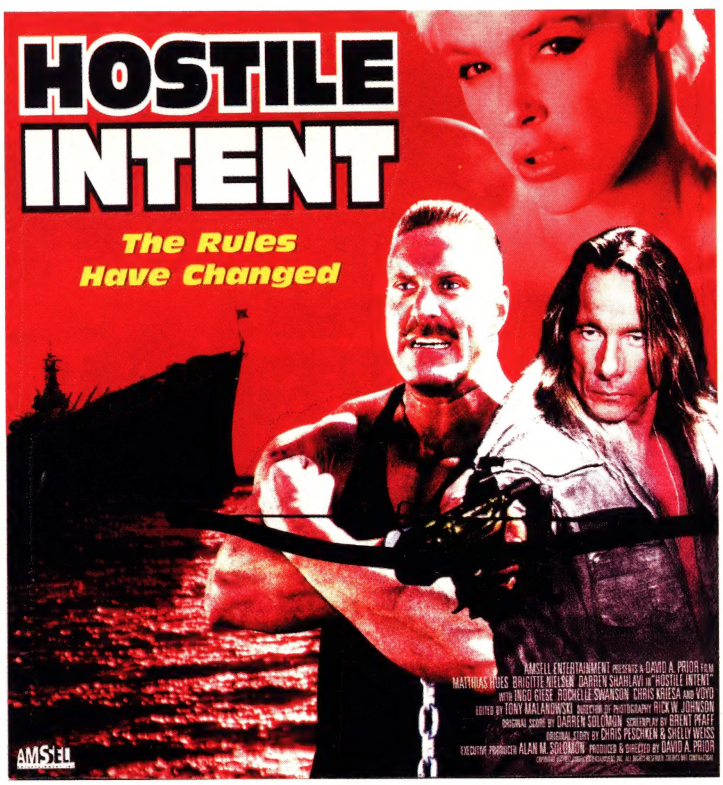
PRODUCERS WANT BRADLEY BADLY



Former *American Ninja/Samurai* star David Bradley remains a hot property with B movie action filmmakers. He headlines *Total Reality*, an s-f thriller (his first) set on a distant planet. Bradley's fans can also catch him into Jalal Merhi productions, *Crisis*, which Merhi directed, and *Expect To Die*, in which Bradley and Merhi co-star.

HUES COMPANY HAS HOSTILE INTENT

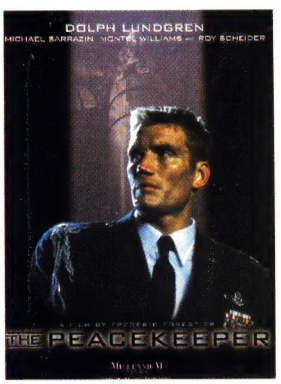
Super nice guy Matthias Hues toplines Amsell's *Hostile Intent* opposite his *Martial Law: Undercover* co-star Brigitte Nielsen. The film is a Mad *Max/Waterworld*-in-reverse post-apocalyptic



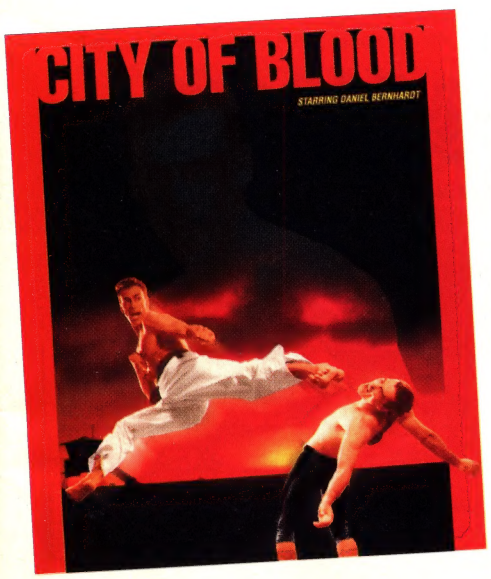
yarn about a bid to control the world's water supply. The film shouldn't be confused (though it undoubtedly will be) with another movie of the exact same title shot in Canada and starring Rob Lowe and John Savage.

NORRIS AND LUNDGREN KEEPING THE PEACE

Two karateka turned action actors are giving peace a chance. Dolph Lundgren stars as *The Peacekeeper* in



Frederic Forrestier's upmarket actioner, while Chuch Norris is *The Peacemaker* in his latest feature. Directing the latter, as ever, is Chuck's brother Aaron.

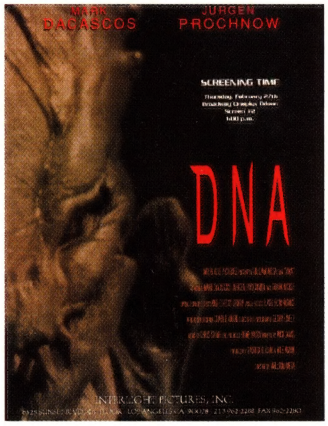


BERNHARDT OUT FOR BLOOD

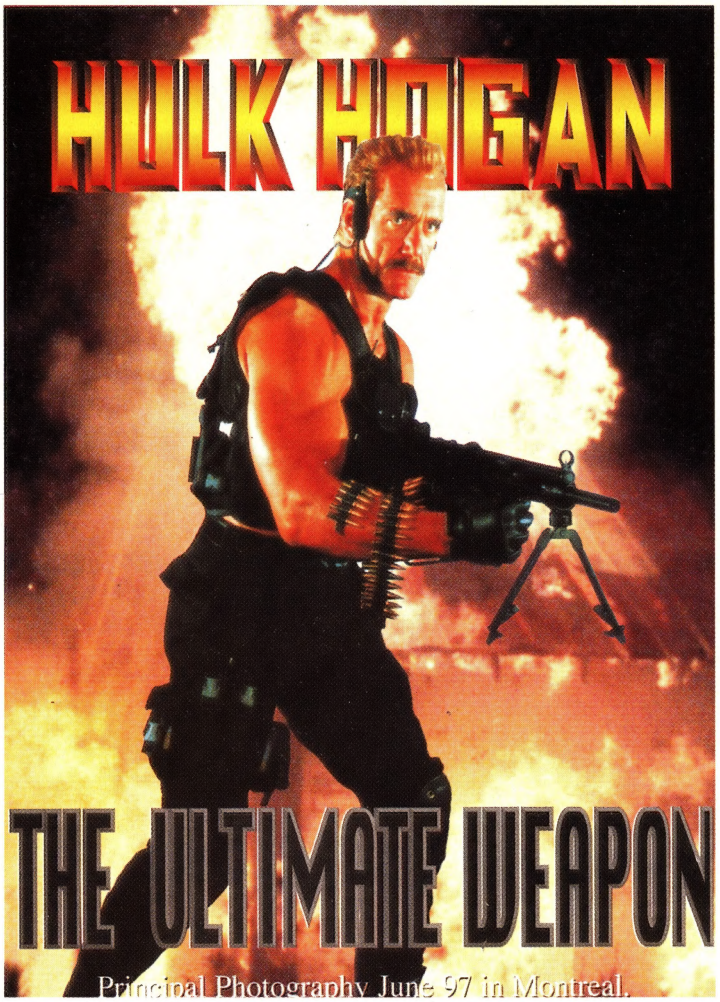
If nothing else, David Worth's latest venture shows that you can make a film starring Daniel Bernhardt with 'Blood' in the title, without following it with 'Sport' and a numeral. The *Bloodsport 2 & 3* star has the lead in *City Of Blood*. Actually, this is *Bloodsport 4* by any other name. Bernhardt plays a martial arts master forced to survive on the deadly streets of the titular metropolis.

DACASCOS AND PROCHNOW ENTER ALIEN NATION

After getting his best chance yet to show off his prodigious martial arts skills in *Drive*, Mark Dacascos is in s-f terrain for his next feature, *DNA*.



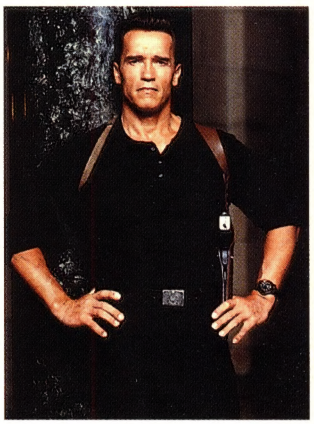
Jurgen Prochnow, currently visible in the director's cult of *Das Boot*, co-stars. They play an archeologist and a CIA agent forced to confront a fearsome mutated super beast. (Sho Bey's in thish one, then, hic? Roy.) Dacascos, one of the busiest action stars on the scene, also stars opposite Rutger Hauer in Nu Image's futuristic *Red Line*.



HULK WILL SMASH AS SUPER WEAPON

He's big, he's belligerent, he's bald... no, wait, Hulk Hogan has a full head of hair for his latest actioner, *The Ultimate Weapon*. Formerly the big-screen's most convincing Popeye lookalike, the former WWF superstar seems to have had his head re-turfed for the flick, directed by the aptly named John Strong.

Arnie CARDIAC Shock

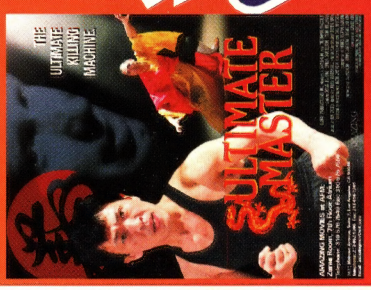


Schwarzenegger gets to the heart of the matter

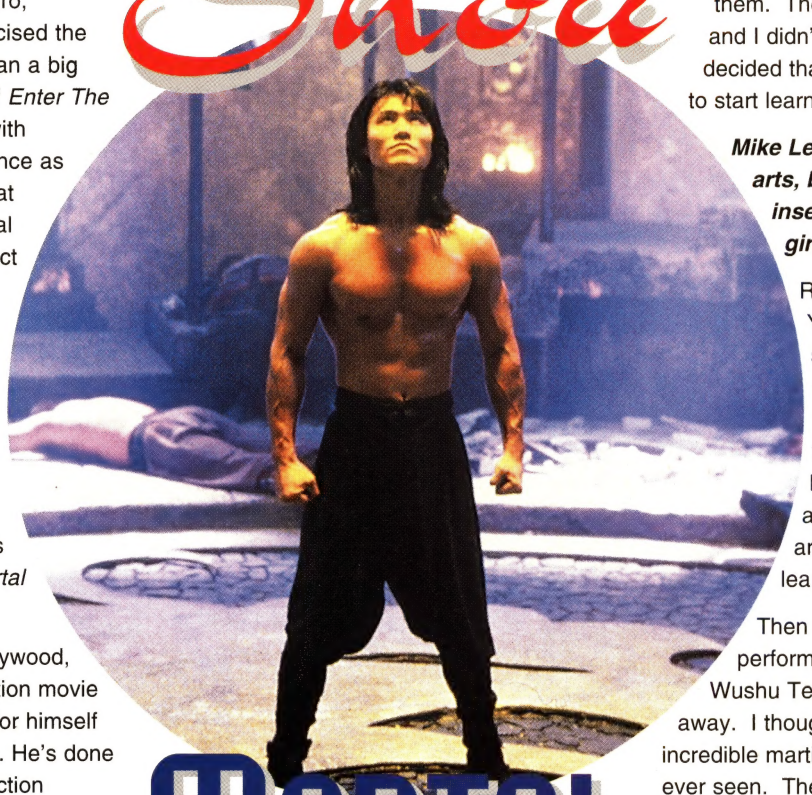
Action star numero uno, Arnold Schwarzenegger, was at the centre of a real life drama when it was announced that he had undergone heart surgery. This followed earlier rumours, hotly denied by the Arnie camp, that the *Terminator* star had suffered a heart attack. Schwarzenegger, 49, underwent successful aortic valve replacement surgery. The Austrian actor will next been seen as Mr. Freeze in this summer's *Batman And Robin*. Everyone at *Impact* wishes him a full recovery.

Ultimate Mistakes

Further evidence that you should never rent, buy or watch any film starring and directed by people who are (a) Korean, (b) seem to be related, or (c) the same person. *Ultimate Master* is guilty on all counts. The star is one Dong Jin Kim, who also produced, together with Won Jae Kim. The director is named David Kim (whom I suspect to be Dong Jin by any other name). You have been warned...



Robin Shou



MORTAL KONVERSATION

Interview by Mike Leeder

When New Line Cinema released their incredibly successful live action adaptation of the video game, *Mortal Kombat*, audiences worldwide were introduced to a new action hero, Robin Shou. While some criticised the film as being nothing more than a big budget sfx-laden reworking of *Enter The Dragon*, few could find fault with Robin's charismatic performance as the heroic Lu K'ang, a role that not only showcased his martial arts abilities to very good effect but also proved he could act. His next film was the very successful New Line release, *Beverly Hills Ninja*, which sees Robin playing the high kicking straight man to comedian Chris Farley. And this summer will see the eagerly awaited release of his third movie for New Line, *Mortal Kombat 2: Annihilation!*

But before his success in Hollywood, Robin was the Hong Kong action movie journeyman, making a name for himself amongst the electric shadows. He's done battle with such Hong Kong action luminaries as Ti Lung in *City War*, Donnie Yen in *Tiger Cage 2*, Moon Lee, Yukari Oshima, Simon Yam, Conan Lee and many more. He even faced off against American Karate legend Joe Lewis in *Death Cage*, and won! And he even had time for a cinematic romance with one of the girls from *Little House On The Prairie* in *Forbidden Night*.

Upon completion of, *Mortal Kombat 2*, I caught up with Robin Shou and stuntman/action director extraordinaire Ridley Tsui Po-Wah, in the relaxing surroundings of the Hard Rock Cafe Kowloon for the ultimate rap and run down on Shou's cinematic career.

Mike Leeder: Robin, can we start off with some biographical details? Where were you born and raised?

Robin Shou: Well, my story begins in Hong Kong (laughing)! I was born here and then in 1971, my family moved to the United States. I attended school and University in California and I eventually graduated with a BA in Civil Engineering. I then spent two years working as a civil engineer, hating every moment of it (laughing)! After two years, I was bored, starting to feel burned out and in need of a career change. So I came to Hong Hong, originally just for a vacation to think about what I was going to do with my life. And while I was here, I was approached about working on a movie.

Mike Leeder: More on that later please! Could you tell me how you first got into martial arts?

Robin: Because of a girl! My girlfriend at the time was learning Kenpo Karate and one night she asked me to come down and see what she was doing. Now she was the only girl in a class full of guys, so of course she was getting a lot of attention from all of them. They were all flirting with her and I didn't like that (laughing)! So I decided that maybe it was time for me to start learning martial arts myself.

Mike Leeder: You took up martial arts, because you were feeling insecure about your girlfriend?

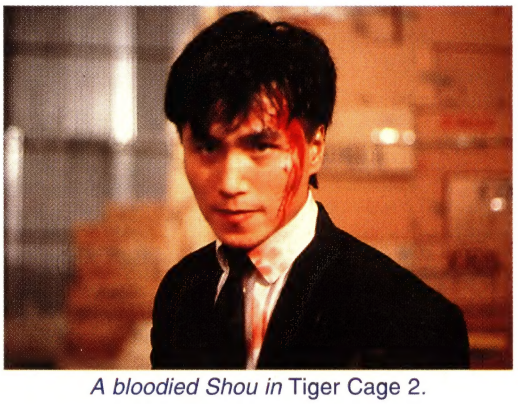
Robin Shou: (Laughing) Yeah, I guess so. I know it sounds really stupid, but at the time, it seemed like a good enough reason and that's what got me started. But I very quickly developed a real love for the martial arts, and I was a pretty fast learner too.

Then in 1980, I saw a performance in L.A. by the Beijing Wushu Team, and I was just blown away. I thought that they were the most incredible martial artists and athletes I had ever seen. They really impressed me, and inspired me to travel to China to train. When I came back to the U.S. I won quite a few tournaments at a local level, but I couldn't compete nationally because of my studies.

Mike Leeder: You came to Hong Kong, originally for a holiday and ended up staying and doing movies. Could you speak Cantonese then?

Robin Shou: (Laughing) Very badly, I couldn't read but I could just about communicate okay.

Mike Leeder: Do you remember what your first film was?



A bloodied Shou in Tiger Cage 2.

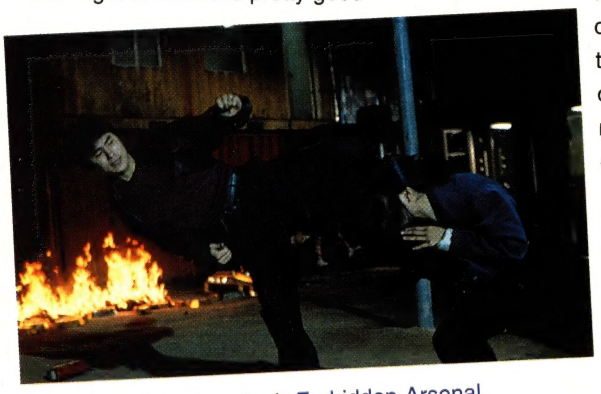
Robin Shou: Yeah, my first was a really violent police movie called *The Big Heat*. The film stars Waise Lee from *A Bullet In The Head*, and Wong Chu-hsien from *Chinese Ghost Story*. For my first film, I played an evil assassin with a

Robin Shou

very bad moustache, and I get cut in half by an elevator. It was on this movie that I first met Ridley Tsui, he was a stuntman working for one of the film's three action directors Paul Wong. I really enjoyed working on the film, and I got along quite well with Paul, Ridley and the other stuntguys from the beginning.

Mike Leeder: You are visible as an actor/stuntman in a lot of movies including,* Line Of Duty 3 *with Cynthia Khan,* Casino Raiders *with Andy Lau and Alan Tam, Frankie Chan's dark epic* Burning Ambition, *and many more.

Robin Shou: Hey, *Burning Ambition* was fun. I got to do some pretty good action in that film, and a really funny introduction as Iron Club (laughing) with my 3 section staff. I did about 30 or so movies as an actor/stuntman in minor and supporting roles.



The Shou fits in Forbidden Arsenal.

Mike Leeder: One of the first companies to really start to push you was Regent Films. The company owned and run by the ultra prolific actor/producer/director Phillip Ko Fei. How did you first hook up with him?

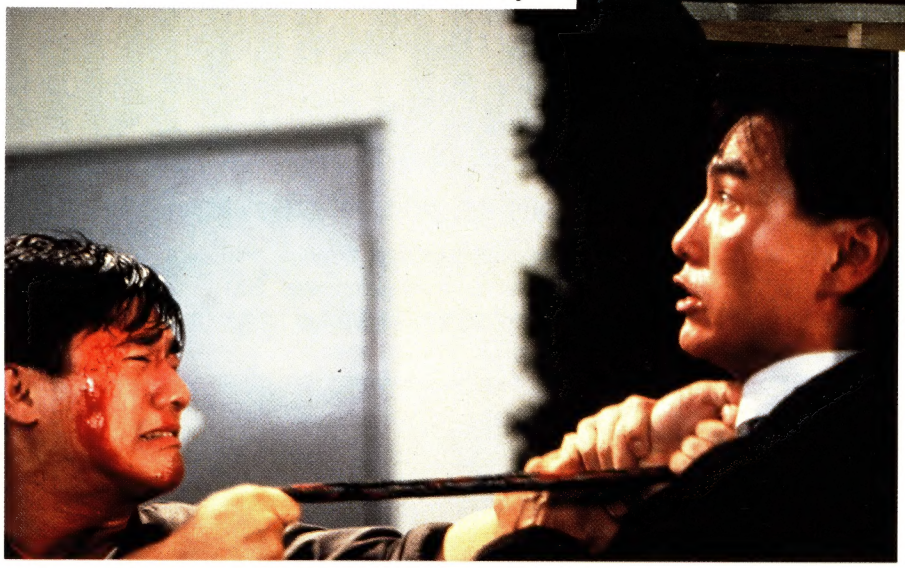
Robin Shou: I had done a lot of films where I played an assassin, or one of the film's main villains. And it was about this time that Regent started to get a certain amount of financial backing, I think that because I was relatively new, had a reasonable look, some experience and most importantly as far as Ko Fei was concerned, my martial arts were pretty good, they decided to hire me.

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The first film I did for him was an actioneer called *Fatal Termination* starring Moon Lee, Simon Yam and Ray Lui. I was the lead villain and had my biggest role acting wise at that point. I think I did an okay job, and most importantly the film did quite well at the box office, so Ko Fei wanted me to do more films with him, and other companies started to use me.

Mike Leeder: Now Ko Fei is incredibly prolific to say the least, although his output is of varying quality. Opinions of him vary from those who think he's a genius, a kind of Far Eastern Roger Corman, to those who hate him and everything he does. You worked extensively with him, what is he like?





Asian VJ David Wu tries some tie-boxing on Robin Shou in Tiger Cage 2.

Robin dukes it out with Cynthia Khan in Forbidden Arsenal.

Robin Shou: As a director and producer he knows what he's doing. He thinks very fast and is very good at improvising. He knows his shots and angles very well. Now his finished product might not suit everybody's particular taste but he knows what he's doing. He's the ultimate guerilla film-maker, you set him a challenge and he'll overcome it. If there's a problem with the cast or a location, he'll work out some way to get around it. An example of which is when I got hurt on *Guns & Roses*; another director would have abandoned filming, but not him! (Laughing) Of course, with some of his films, abandoning them might have been an improvement.

As for how Ko Fei is on a personal level, no comment! But as a film-maker he knows what he's doing. He can be a good director, but too often he wastes himself on projects of low potential or that are purely disposable. I think a lot of that is because he is so prolific nowadays, that he hasn't got the luxury of time to spend on his projects. He no sooner finishes one then he's beginning the next.

Mike Leeder:* Cyprus Tigers *pitted you against Simon Yam and Conan Lee. Was this an enjoyable film to work on?

Robin Shou: Yes, on some levels it was good. I got to visit Cyprus which was nice but as for the film, well I have always thought that I shouldn't have been one of the villains. I could have played one of the heroes. I thought that I had proved myself capable of playing a leading role and in *CT*, I had a very minor role really. Myself and the Japanese guy play these two very stupid villains and not only was it a disappointment as an actor, I didn't even get too much to do in the way of action. I thought that I deserved to be playing Conan's role, but maybe at the time Ko Fei

didn't think I was quite ready to play the lead. So I did the best job I could as the bad guy.

It was a good experience working on the film though. Simon Yam was great to work with, he's a very good actor and a really nice guy. Conan was cool, and Cyprus was a nice place to be shooting in. So while it wasn't my greatest role, it was a good experience.

Mike Leeder: How was Conan Lee to work with? He always seems to get a lot of bad press, and when I met him on* Prince Of The Sun *he wasn't very personable.

Robin Shou: Conan is very much somebody that you have to get to know very well before you are going to be able to understand him. If you don't know him too well, he can come across as very cocky and arrogant (laughing), but once you get to know him, he's pretty cool. His philosophy is pretty much along the lines of you having to prove yourself to him before he's going to treat you with any respect.

Mike Leeder: Now the first time that I met you was in early 1990 on location of the very troubled Regent films producion,* Fury In Red, *which starred Conan Lee, yourself, Ben Ng, and the U.K.'s own Mark Houghton.

Robin Shou: That was one screwed up movie! Ko Fei had started filming a movie with me and Conan in L.A. several months earlier and then decided to stop filming it and make another movie in Hong Kong starring Ben Ng, that had nothing to do with me and Conan! But about halfway through this one, he decided that he could tie both films together by filming some additional

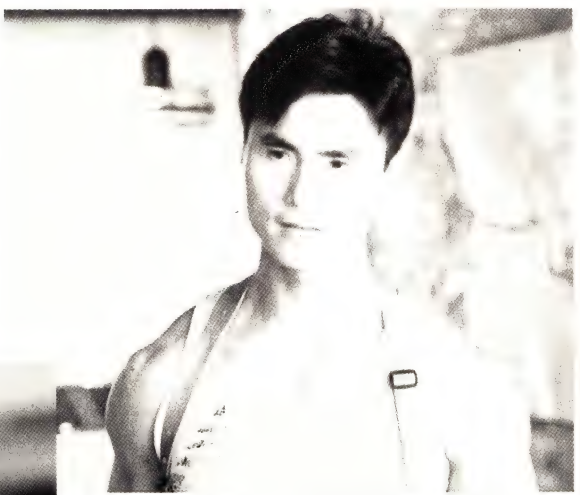


The debonair Robin Shou in Black Cat 2.

footage using Conan, myself and Ben Ng. (Laughing) This is one of the biggest problems the Hong Kong film industry has had, nobody really cared about a lot of the films being made, the producers looked at it merely as product and as long as it had a running time of about 90 minutes or so, they could sell it. Unfortunately the lack of care in the last couple of years has badly affected the local film industry.

Now this film is surprisingly not as bad as it sounds, although it was three different sections of films cut together into something of a potboiler. It's okay. It's not high art but it is an okay film. This film proves exactly how resourceful Ko Fei is, we had so many problems during the making of this film. The final problem was that during the filming of the ending, Ko Fei and Conan had a big disagreement and Conan left the movie, which is why his character suddenly gets killed off in an explosion. I defy anyone to try and make a movie under these conditions.

Mike Leeder: You turned up in the ill fated TV show,* Yellow Read Street, *wearing a gold lame jacket in a non action role. And you also did the U.S. TV movie* Forbidden Night, *in a purely dramatic role as co-lead with Melissa Gilbert from* Little House On The Prairie. *How did you feel about playing straight acting, non action roles?



Robin sports pecs and piece in Black Cat 2.

Robin Shou: You've seen everything Mike (laughing)! I liked getting a chance to just act without having to fight. I mean, *YS*, was a show that could have done with a lot more action to help it go places, but it was a good chance to improve my craft as an actor. It was only a small role, but I got to play a very suave debonair ladies man, which was fun.

Mike Leeder:* Forbidden Love *must have really been a challenge for you. You play the co-lead and it's a very dramatic story. How did you get the role?



Robin Shou in Mortal Kombat mode.

Robin Shou: It's very rare that a project like this comes along, especially for an Asian leading man in a big American production. I think just about everybody went up for the casting for this project, Simon Yam, Mark Cheng, both Tony Leungs (laughing). Every Hong Kong actor who could speak a word of English went to audition for this project. I went up for it against all these big names actors, and at the time I was pretty much a nobody, I was a little known stunt actor and they ended up choosing me for the lead. (Laughing) I was very proud to get the role, it put a real spring in my step. It gave my confidence in my acting a boost, too.

Mike Leeder: Your first lead role/starring role comes in the tournament movie* Deathcage/Bloodfight 2, *with American Karate legend Joe Lewis. Would you mind talking about this film?

Robin: All of my dark secrets are being revealed today (laughing)! I know this film is a bit hokey, but I like it. It was my first leading role, it might not be a great piece of cinematic art but it's a fun movie in a cheesy way. It's movies like this that boost your motivation, that push you to work a little bit harder. I can look back at a movie like *Death Cage*, and say that I've come a long way. I think I've progressed as both a martial artist and as an actor since the early days.

Next month: More Hong Kong insights and *The Mortal Combat Movie.*

donnie brasco

mob rule



Gangster movies have a rich and varied history. There's *The Godfather*, the king of them all. There are *WiseGuys* and *Casino*. There's even *The Untouchables*. The man behind *Four Weddings & A Funeral* would seem an unlikely choice to helm the latest contribution to the genre, but Mike Newell handles it all very well.

Donnie Brasco is the dramatised true story of FBI Special agent Joe Pistone (Johnny Depp) an officer sent deep undercover to infiltrate the Mob, circa late 1970s. It's an assignment that's costing him dear. His once stable marriage is falling apart due his long absences. The life he's living is full of danger and swift retribution and - perhaps worse - he actually begins to feel at home in the seedy environment. He's won the confidence of aging hit-man and would be wiseguy Lefty Ruggiero (Al Pacino) who is genuinely charismatic and caring. The day will come though, when the boundaries that define these men and the different worlds they must inhabit will have to be clearly defined...and the result could be fatal.

"What took me is very simple. It was the look of 'Forgetabout it' and 'Gettoutahere' spelt as one words on a printed page. Those words made me laugh a great deal, seeing them as one block. I reckoned that one of two things would happen. One would be that it would be a fresh look at things and secondly that it wouldn't take some parts too seriously. Both of them were true, it could change from a comedy to a tragedy. I was intrigued by that take on an old subject," says Newell.

"I had to do it because so many movies have been made, so much has been written...we all know so much about them - or we think we know so much about the Mob - that if I was going to go up against Scorsese and Coppolla then I had to make sure that I earned the right. That there was something fresh to be said and that I wasn't being conned by what appeared to be fresh. I had to research, I had to be an anthropologist. I took out my dug-out canoe and paddled up the Brooklyn River as it were. I was in very foreign territory."



Director Mike Newell prepares a scene for Donnie Brasco, *inspired by a true story of trust and betrayal in the cutthroat world of the Mafia Underground.*

In fact *Donnie Brasco* bares some similarities with the likes of another Pacino classic, *Serpico*. The film is very much about the conflicts of values in a society with a very dignified exterior, full of rules of etiquette and friendship but which has an underlying layer of vicious retribution and criminal activity. Newell actually met various members of the underworld during his research.

Pacino and Depp sparkle. Here are two actors who are truly talented performers - one a veteran of the industry, the other a young man who has quickly risen past his contemporaries. These are both men who can act without words when necessary. They act with their eyes and bodies, as much as the spoken word. Often it is what remains unsaid that hangs in the air longest. The supporting cast includes the ever reliable Michael Madsen and Bruno Kirby. This isn't as tough as, say, *Casino*, but it seems to have more emotional truth to it. Newell has indeed made these characters as likeable as they are dangerous. These are not people you would want to cross, but the kind you'd want backing you up - as long as they weren't after your job or you after theirs.

This is clearly one of Depp's best roles in a long time and Pacino is still very much on form. *Donnie Brasco* is one of those movies that is definitely for those who take their films seriously. - **John Mosby.**

The success of... Scream



CRAVEN IMAGE

Wes Craven was the man who brought us ***A Nightmare On Elm St***, a marvellously inventive horror pic that was followed by a number of far inferior slash and splice sequels and it's taken over a decade for him to make a film that almost measures up to it.

Scream is a sly tongue-in-cheek movie that walks a fine line between traditional horror and a cleverly scripted satire. The one problem in television and film is that no-one talks about relevant things within that medium. When did you ever hear a character in ***Emmerdale*** chatting about what happened in last night's ***Coronation Street***? Why didn't the ***Star Trek*** guy in the red jacket (always doomed from the word go) change his wardrobe? Don't these people know the rules? Haven't they read the script? And here we have the brilliance of **Craven's** latest work.

Sure enough, a killer is stalking a picturesque American town. He's doing nasty things to the town's kids and generally behaves in a less than socially responsible manner. The difference from the outset is that while there are all the usual ingredients here, the characters are all too aware of the traditional stereotypes. Even our mysterious killer first questions his victims about their favourite horror flick. When our heroine Sydney (Neve Campbell from TV's *Party Of Five*) is first called by the killer she says she has no time for such a genre. 'The blonde bimbo with the big breasts is too busy running upstairs screaming when she should be heading out the front door' she reasons. Smart girl. The only problem is the killer's seen those movies too!



Craven cranks up the suspense nicely. When the phone rings, the question is immediately not who's calling, but where's he calling from? After all it's no good running out the front door if he's on the porch waiting for you! He's also not averse to a bit of self-depreciating humour... watch out for a string of visual jokes. Isn't that Linda Blair (last seen with a revolving head in *The Exorcist*) as a TV reporter? Why does the janitor insist on having a wardrobe borrowed from a Mr F. Krueger Esq.?



***Skeet Ulrich (left) and Neve Campbell in* Scream.**

The casting is also good. It's not spoiling anything to say that Drew Barrymore lasts all of the first ten minutes and becomes the first(?) victim of the man in the mask shaped very much like the 'scream' in the painting of the same name. Courteney Cox (of *Friends* fame) plays an ambitious and scruple-free TV newshound who thinks that the current spate of murders could be linked to the death of Sydney's mother exactly a year before. She's also convinced that Sydney has wrongly identified the man on death row for that crime. But don't try to guess the truth behind the plot. 'Motive?' says one character, 'It's much more scary when there's no motive!'. Craven gives us enough red-herrings to repopulate the Dead Sea and beyond. It could be any of the usual suspects, or none of them.

In fact if the characters in the film, aware as they are of every slasher pic and psycho manifesto, are representative of today's U.S. kids, the country could have a real problem.

+ TO ADD

Buena Vista have also pared us with a handful of *Scream* goodies. We have *Scream* baseball shirts (for men) cropped tops (for the ladies) and ruck-sacks.

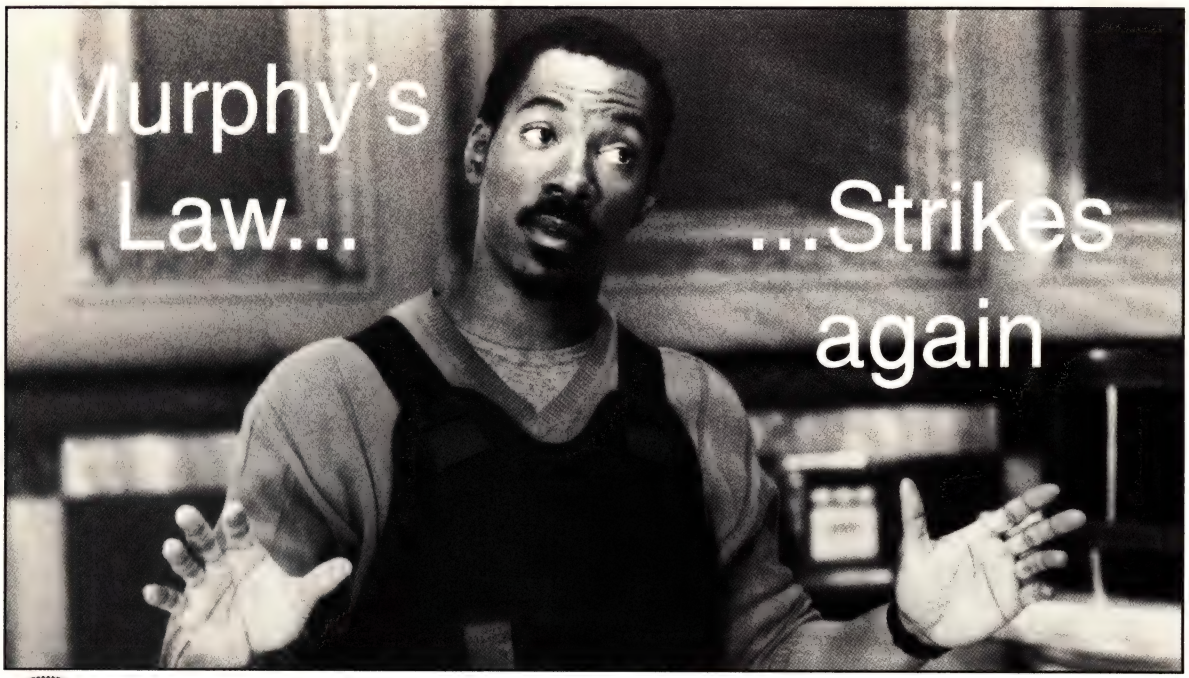
Q: Name Courteney Cox's character in *Friends*.

Answer on a postcard to; Scream Comp. Impact Magazine, Revenue Chambers, St. Peter's Street, Huddersfield HD11DL.

footnote:

(Thanks to Laurence at Buena Vista for the exclusive gala-party tickets!)

Murphy's Law... ...Strikes again

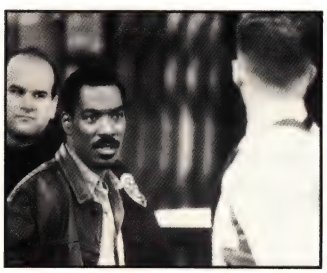


John Mosby finds that the streets of San Fransisco are looking a little shabby in Eddie Murphy's new movie, *Metro*.

It's official. Eddie Murphy is like a plateful of brussel sprouts.

Let me explain: you either enjoy him or you don't - it's a matter of taste. Given a decent script and something to do, he can be perfectly watchable. Hits such as the *Beverly Hills Cop* movies and the recent *Nutty Professor* prove that he can be funny and keep the bums on seats for ninety minutes or so. It's the standard of his performance that usually keeps a film afloat or sinks it with nary a bubble.

Metro is his latest film and it breaks the mould in only one singular aspect: Murphy is good, but the film isn't. It has all the direction of a cross-eyed homing pigeon. You can almost see the scriptwriters and executives huddled around a table working on the script.





'Let's have a car chase.'

'OOOOh, good idea - and let's throw in a dead partner and a grumpy boss?'

'What about an eager new partner and a psychotic killer?'

'Wonderful. Get Murphy to swear a bit and we'll have a winner!'

Only they don't. Almost everything here has been done before, done better and with more style. The plot meanders all over the place, with little sense and with gaping holes in credibility. The actors, mostly on form, try vainly to overcome the inadequate script, but they are fighting a losing battle.

The plot (and I use the term loosely) is as follows. Murphy is Scott Roper, a wise-cracking hostage negotiator. He's the man who goes in to a potentially fatal situation (such as a bank siege), assesses the risk factor and tries to calm down everyone involved. He's good at his job and Murphy is at his best in the various scenes that crank up this particular type of tension. By an incredible co-incidence, a mere few days after his buddy is stabbed to death, the criminal in question (Michael Wincott) holds up a jewellery store and such a siege develops. The scene is set for a stand-off between two men who know every trick in the book. A negotiator and a man not willing to negotiate anything. So far, so good. The idea is fine and could have produced a solid movie theme.

Wincott, always cast as a deliciously evil baddie gives a strong charismatic performance for the establishing scenes and his dialogue with Murphy works well. But less than a third of the way in, the ball is well and truly fumbled. The cliches are unleashed and they come thick and fast - heaven help us, there's even a moment of pet-in-peril. There is a chase through the streets - ending with a runaway tram and car-crashes by the score. The sequence goes on for ages. I found myself looking at my watch twice before the brakes were applied. This has to be the slowest tram in the city, or the longest straight road ever created. The on/off girlfriend (played by English actress Carmen Ejogo) is put in peril by Korda (Wincott) after he escapes from jail in a sequence that questions the fact that any security exists in San Fransisco's penal institutions. Then it's formula cat and mouse, the emphasis firmly on the cheesy bits.



Eddie Murphy stars as hostage negotiator Scott Roper, whilst bottom left: Michael Wincott stars as Korda, a psychotic killer.

Somewhere there's a good movie trying to get out. The Murphy humour - at its best when it's kept on a leash, is mostly fine here. There are moments that look painfully ad-libbed, but as a whole he is one of the redeeming factors of the film. Michael Rapaport is also watchable as Murphy's new partner Kevin McCall, an eager ex-SWAT member. He's a good foil for Murphy's jokes, but able to hold his own and not get trampled under foot. It looks as if the major damage has been done in the editing. Perhaps it looked good on paper - it looks less favourable on the big screen. Murphy's career has been a series of peaks and troughs. Metro is nowhere near the abysmal depths of the offensive *Boomerang* or disappointing *Vampire in Brooklyn*, but nor is it anywhere near the high calibre of *Trading Places* or *Coming to America*. Trust me: skip the cinema trip and wait until it arrives on video...you can go and make the tea during the sillier moments.



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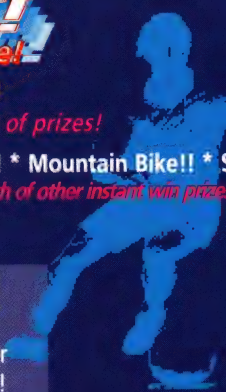
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VAL KILMER
ELISABETH SHUE
THE
SAINT



Halo, I must be going...

After ditching the Bat-suit, Val Kilmer finally dons the halo. John Mosby meets the man with the worst rep in Hollywood and the director who took his life in his hands to cast him.

It seems that you can barely turn a cinematic corner without tripping over a revamped idea from yesterday. In the last few years we've had remakes and big-screen versions of everything from *The Flintstones* to *Mission Impossible*. In the works we have *The Avengers* and *Lost In Space*. As for the revamped *Star Wars*, don't get me started. It was only a matter of time then before *The Saint* winged his way to the big screen.

It's been a project that has been waiting in the wings for some time. A handful of varied actors were mentioned for the part...including Hugh Grant?

"Well he says we offered him the part, but I can't remember that, so maybe it was the studio. Mel Gibson was the first person we considered. He would have been perfect. All the actors we considered would have been perfect, but only one of them could play it! Mel was doing publicity for *Braveheart* and remained out of the country for a long time, then he chose to do *Ransom*. Ralph Fiennes was doing *Hamlet* and then he finally decided, quite rightly, to do *The English Patient*. We also spoke to George Clooney, who - at the time - was still waiting to hear the ratings for *ER's* second year and was about three weeks off being the new sensation. Hugh Grant, we did think about. Then we went to Val, who we'd always resisted because we thought 'How can you be Batman in the winter and The Saint in the winter? He was offered the part and expressed his reluctance to play in the Bat-Suit again, so that problem went away."

Needless to say, getting hold of Val Kilmer had its problems. When he originally won the part of the caped crusader, Val was in a cave full of bats near Johannesburg. When he was to be offered the Simon Templar role, Val was in a jungle..

"Actually it was a game reserve," Noyce reveals, "and it was full of live animals. After you got to the animals, there was Val in his tent preparing for *The Ghost & The Darkness*."



But one second. This is Val Kilmer. Yes, THAT Val Kilmer. The actor who - and how to put this delicately - doesn't seem to be on many people's Christmas card lists. The actor to whom industry veteran Marlon Brando allegedly told: 'Don't confuse the size of your talent with the size of your paycheck'. The one we're not suppose to look at without asking...and oh, he may want to know your star-sign and sexual orientation...

The thing is, meet the guy and it's hard to believe you are talking to the same man featured in all those paper cuttings. God forbid that *The Daily Mail*, that bastion of public morality, should have got anything wrong, but maybe the truth is a little less sensational than you may have been led to believe.

"I had been buoyed by the excessive positive descriptions by Joel Schumacher, before Val expressed a reluctance to play Batman again. So, Joel had said to get to know him, that he was a great guy and works very hard. He said all this almost as relentlessly as he's said the opposite since - though not quite as publicly," explains The Saint's director Philip Noyce. "From the stories that had emerged from *The Island Of Dr Moreau*, whether to fear the animals or Val the most. But as it turned out I didn't have to fear















either. He was very aimiable and perhaps only difficult in his over-enthusiasm."

Kilmer decided that the halo gave more room for acting than the Bat-suit and jumped ship. Whether he was pushed, jumped and to whose benefit is open to question. Kilmer has his own take on events.

"I liked the whole idea of this (*The Saint*) more," is Kilmer's reasoning. "I'd already done Batman. I don't think of what I would have done if there hadn't been a scheduling conflict. It was a combination of a lot of things. The script wasn't finished and any job is a risk. Batman was one of the more secure commercial jobs and it would have been financial security, but I've never made those kind of business choices a priority. I try to do what entertains me."

The film gives Kilmer full reign to explore and flesh out the various disguises and characters that the mysterious and enigmatic Simon Templar uses in his various feats of derring-do. That was one of the attractions that drew Kilmer into the project.

"Yeah, I first met Phil when I was about to start *The Ghost & The Darkness*," Kilmer recalls. "I didn't know whether I could do the job. I read the script and he took a long time explaining what it represented. The script can be moulded, it doesn't really exist. It doesn't tell you whether the movie works. Films are more reflective of their directors than actors or writers. He said there were various plots and sub-plots that he was interested in collaborating on. I liked the idea of someone who comes from nowhere and can go anywhere. So I made distinctions between disguises and characters. Simon really enjoys the characters he plays. He survives by his wits, he's a confidence man."

Noyce is no stranger to action adventure. This is the man who brought us Harrison Ford as Jack Ryan in *Clear & Present Danger*. He's actually been quoted as saying that Val Kilmer is no more difficult to work with than Harrison Ford.

"It means that neither are difficult. Harrison having matured into making movies with so many great directors - and so successfully - he knows that unless you are doing Shakespeare or some classic text, the script is a starting point and the only sin you can commit is not to try and work it to your advantage as much as possible. He was always push, push, pushing which was something he'd learned from those directors. Val is the same. You invite people to work with you because you think they are talented. Therefore you must create an environment where their talents work best."

But what about those rumours? *The Daily Mail* reported that people were ordered not to look at him, that he had to know intimate details about people before he'd hire them. Noyce would find it all quite amusing, if it hadn't come to be the centre of a media frenzy.

"Val only employed one person on this movie and that was his personal assistant!" says Noyce. "I employed everyone else and I didn't ask them about their religious beliefs or anything! Some of these stories start from some grain of truth. We did use unexperienced extras. They tried to elevate their parts from nobody to somebody. They would look at the camera or try to make eye contact with the central performers. The problem is that it's nothing to do with the story and you have to yell CUT!"

"Actually it's not too many people (who have complained)... just one who's been

Quote...Unquote

"Val is the most psychologically troubled human being I've ever worked with....Val did me two great favours. When I wanted him to be Batman he said yes. Then he created a situation which allowed me not to have him play Batman again. They were both happy, happy instances for which I will always be grateful."

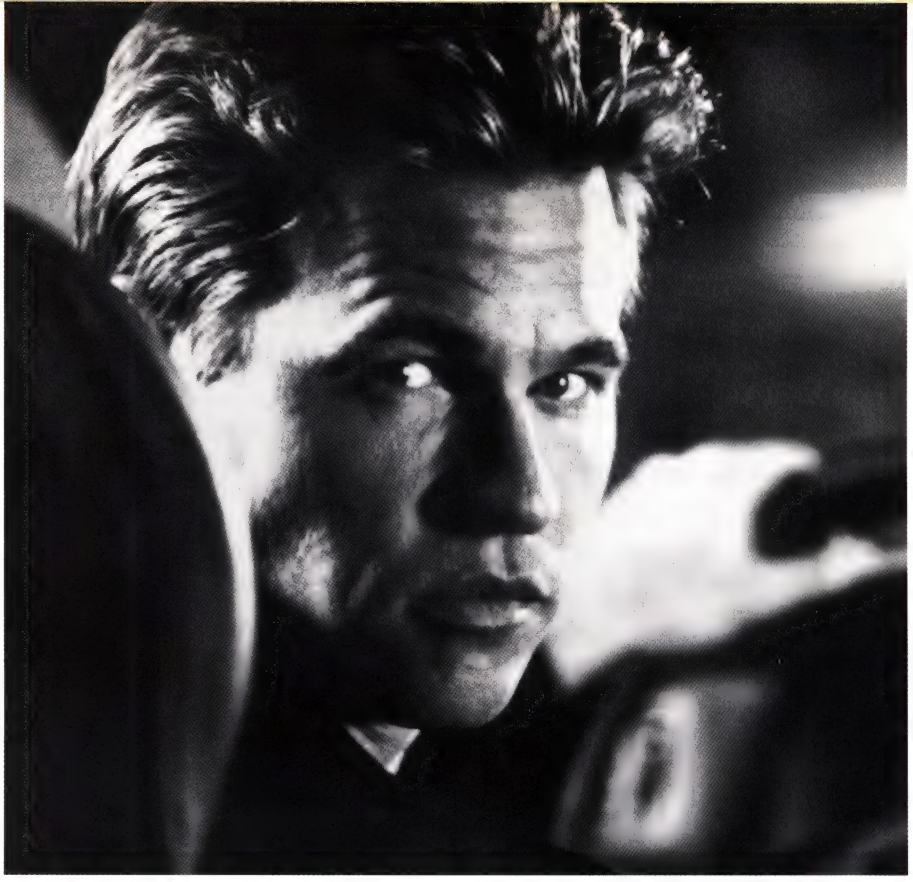
Joel Schumacher - director 'Batman Forever' / 'Batman & Robin' (Premiere)

"There are two things that I will never do in my life. I will never climb Mount Everest and I will never work with Val Kilmer again."

John Frankenheimer - director 'Island of Dr.Moreau' (Premiere)

"Every actor has a process that it takes for them to get whatever they have to offer on film. Val's is no more complicated than some bit-players who agonise over their two lines - but Val has 2000. A director's job is to be a magician, to convince. It can be an admission of your failure rather than the actor's."

Philip Noyce - director *The Saint*.





Director Phillip Noyce and Producer Mace Neufield prepare to shoot a scene in Moscow's Red Square for The Saint.

really dedicated about it!" says Kilmer, probably referring to Schumacher. "What's hideous is that it's founded on allegations that are true, in that I like to work hard. People who have been on them know that film-sets can be very tedious. I like to work a lot. Strangely enough, the best directors like to work a lot too. Some of those things that were said were personal attacks. But I don't think it's cost me work. Those kind of things never do. I'm sure they'll stop too because these things usually backfire and the person who said it ends up looking rather ridiculous."

So what of the movie itself? Well, this isn't exactly Roger Moore/Ian Ogilvy territory. Though many elements of the character remain intact, this is not a quintessential Englishman with slightly dubious intentions. The 90s Saint is a man without a country but a bank account that some countries would appreciate. This is a man who goes by any number of names (usually the monikers of famous Saints). Even Simon Templar is not the name he was born with. If he has no country to call home, he at least has a handful of personalities, so many identities that he has lost count. To paraphrase the promo-copy for the recent *Primal Fear*, a person who wears more than one face forgets which one is real. In this version, we can believe that Templar no longer really cares. He enjoys his job and the fringe benefits. He likes pulling the wool over people's eyes and the rug out from beneath them. He wouldn't shoot you in the back, but he'd stick a sign on it saying kick me (at the same time as picking your pocket). Trust him with your life, not your wallet.

Templar is hired by high-ranking Russians (on the brink of a new revolution) to steal the formula for Cold Fusion - a power source that could supply clean energy to the world and make a tidy profit for whoever has the formula itself! Getting the list of letters, numbers and equations is not much of a problem. That they are the property of Dr Emma Russell, played by the delightful Elisabeth Shue means that The Saint is going to have to decide between pay-check and heart-ache. Will our hero do the decent thing? Or is he incapable of doing the right thing. Soon the couple are being targetted by all sides.

It's all very much a one-man Mission Impossible concept - not very Saintly, but good fun. One thing for trivia buffs - try to recognise the radio voice-over at the very end of the movie. It should let you know the past may be gone, but it's hardly forgotten.

letters

I've got an idea!

Dear *Impact*,

I'm writing you this letter for your opinion and good advice.

This is my problem, I've got a good idea for a new action TV series which I've called *McCoy*; a man hired by Government or people in need of his talent i.e. protection (bodyguard), pick-pocketing, setting people up, and burglary.

I'm begging for you to put me on the right track, in case it's already been thought of, and if your wondering what it'll be about, just think about *The Professionals*, *Mission Impossible* and *The Equaliser* rolled into one, with the 'slickness' of Roger Moore (James Bond) and the 'hardness' of Bodie (Lewis Collins) of *The Professionals*.

I don't want to get sued if someone has already thought of it, that's why I am writing to you first for some expert advice (well I think you know what I'm getting at here e.g. Legal action... if it's a good idea etc).

Next, I've come up with an idea to direct and write a prequel to *Split Second* which starred Rutger Hauer, it leads up to how his partner gets killed, whilst both working on a case of 'bizarre' murders.

My friends told me that to be a good director you need to go to college or university and get some good education. I don't want to go to college, I just want to skip all that and DIRECT FILMS, I've already got six films in mind.

Also when will you be doing another issue on Carl Weathers?

I hope you print this letter as it might help others like me, new WANNABE directors and writers etc.

Paul Gerrard, Aberdeen.

Dear Paul,

It's said everyone has a novel inside them, the same is probably true for films.

However, it's one thing having an idea and another putting it into practice. A director has to know about cameras, lenses, lighting, perspective and editing. In short: everything.

I'm not trying to pour water on to your dreams, but any job or profession worth doing is worth training for. There's little point writing a prequel/sequel to an existing film. Characters, stories and certain existing conditions are heavily copy-rigthted i.e. you wouldn't want somebody to do anything they wanted with a character you created! (However, if it's just for practice, not profit or public showing, you should be okay). Most existing films have copyright restrictions, but why not practice with a cam-corder and take a look at the courses in the Media Guardian *every Monday. Good Luck! - John.*

Devoted shocked fan

Dear Bey Logan,

As a devoted Jean-Claude Van Damme fan, I thank you for the sensitive article you have written in the March issue.

I hate the way the press have reported about him.

I hate drugs, and I was shocked when I read about him going into a Drug Abuse Clinic, but I tried to understand the pressures that must have driven him to this.

You have been lucky enough to meet Jean-Claude (a dream I have had for a long time) so you can write at first hand about the change in him. Why do the press so enjoy destroying people without trying to understand the reasons why?

I pray that he will have the strength and willpower to get over this for his own sake and for his career and family. His wife Darcy is now back with him so perhaps this will help him.

Thank you again for such sympathetic and understanding writing.

Is it possible to buy a copy of the *Impact* back issue Jean-Claude is holding at the top of the page? Could you please let me know as I collect anything on Van Damme?

Norma Edwards, Druids Heath, Birmingham.

Unfortunately, we don't have any copies of the very first Impact *left, Norma. Maybe you could try some second hand magazine stores? From the days when I used to live in Birmingham, I seem to remember there were a couple near The Bull Ring. Van Damme will soon be here in Hong Kong filming* Knock Off. *I'll be seeing him then, and will pass on the warm wishes of yourself and his other British fans. - Bey*

Keith kicks best

Dear *Impact*,

Firstly let me congratulate you on such a great magazine. The main reason I am writing to you is concerning one of my favourite martial arts stars Keith Cooke. Could you please have some articles on him and maybe an interview, because I just can't believe how your magazine (including others) hardly ever mention him? You have articles on other up and coming action stars but nothing on Keith Cooke, and when you consider Keith's incredible martial art skills it just doesn't seem right for him to be hardly ever mentioned.

Keith is the best martial artist I have ever seen after Bruce Lee. There's nobody working in martial arts films today who can kick as good as him (although Donnie Yen maybe comes close). Many of Keith's kicks on screen are probably just as fast as many of Bruce Lee's on-screen kicks. He also has incredibly fast hands (just watch *China O'Brien II*).

Keith is the type of star who could make any boring film entertaining (if he was in *Cage 2* he could have made it a classic) and he puts many of today's big martial arts stars to shame. Could you please tell me what nationality he is? I know he does Wu Shu but what other styles has he studied and what films does he have coming up? Also, is there an address where I could write to him.

On to something else now. I was wondering if you could give me an address of a company which sells martial arts films with stars such as John Liu, Tan Tao Liang and Casanova Wong? Living in Australia makes it very hard to find films with stars such as these (even when going to Chinese video shops). I was hoping that maybe Bey Logan, being from Australia, would know a company in Australia that sells these types of films. Any information would be greatly appreciated.

To finish off, I recently saw Jackie's new film *Mr Nice Guy* (a.k.a. *Superchef*) and I think it's the best film I have seen in ages. It's the best thing Jackie Chan has done since *Drunken Master 2*. Samo Hung has also proven once again what a great director he is.

Anthony Perri, NSW, Australia.

Believe me, Anthony, you're preaching to the converted. I was on location in Thailand when Keith Cooke shot his terrific introductory scene for King Of The Kickboxers, *and the guy's as impressive live as he is on film. However, you nailed the problem when you said we write about 'up and coming action stars'. In Keith's case, he seems to have come and gone! After his impressive performances in* China O'Brien 1 & 2, *he turned down a Golden Harvest contract and went on to co-star on* K.O.T.K., *then vanished from the scene, then starred in the execrable* Heatsucker, *then vanished, then appeared in the pilot for* Acapulco Heat, *then vanished. His last movie appearance was behind a mask in* Mortal Kombat. *Keith is American. His father is Japanese (hence his real name of 'Hirabayashi') and his mother Caucasian. On your second point, I was recently back in my second home town of Melbourne, and found this great second hand video store on Elisabeth Street. They had loads of older kung fu titles, including some of the Golden Harvest films released by Playaround video. Glad to hear you liked* Mr. Nice Guy. *Someone out there had to! - Bey*

Q&A

The fan from Malta

Dear Bey,

First of all I must tell you what a great magazine you have. I've started buying your mag recently. I've decided to become a big fan of your mag. I am from Malta (Europe), so you can know me as the 'Fan from Malta'.

I have a few questions I would like you to answer please:

1. I've been a long time Van Damme Fan but lost his Fan Club address (one of his fan clubs). Can you please print one for me?

2. ..... talking about JCVD. Sometime ago, I heard that *Monaco Forever* was abandoned in the middle of its shooting for some reason or other and never came out on video or in the cinema, is this true?

3. In your January 97 magazine, a fan of yours, the 'Gozz of Oz' (Daniel Deltondo) from Austarlia mentioned something about *Cyborg 4*. I only saw the first one starring Van Damme, so I reasoned that there is a 2 and 3. Please can you tell me if JCVD starred in the last three Cyborgs?

4. Why is *Independence Day* called ID4 and *Stargate* SG-1.

Your great 'Fan from Malta'

Glen Galea, Mosta, Malta.

Thanks for the letter, Glen. Always good to hear from a Malteser. Unfortunately there isn't a Van Damme Fan Club in the U.K. that we know that is still up and running, if anyone out there knows different, please let us and the rest of our readers hear about it. Monaco Forever *was released on video in the U.K. by our old friends at MIA. JCVD only appeared in the first* Cyborg *movie.* Independence Day *was released July 4th, but I've never heard* Stargate *called* SG1! *- Bey*

Two Tony Leungs?

Dear *Impact*,

I am a big fan of Hong Kong films, but recently I came across something which I couldn't quite figure out. It concerns the big Hong Kong star Tony Leung, who I've seen in four films, *Island On Fire*, *A Better Tomorrow 3*, *Hard Boiled*, and *Bullet In The Head*, and I've concluded that there are either two Tony Leungs or that he has two faces because he just doesn't look the same. I saw him in *Hard Boiled* but I never even thought he was in *Island On Fire*, and had it not been for the video sleeve, I would never have known he was, because the man just does not look the same, and I really mean it. It's not just the hair or anything, his face is truly different. It's longer and the jaw is wider. He looks, in a *Better Tomorrow 3*, as he does in *Island On Fire*, and the same in *Hard Boiled* as *Bullet In The Head*. What is going on? The latter films were both made after *Island* and *Tomorrow*, so did something happen inbetween these film? Did he have plastic surgery like Mark Hamill did in between *Star Wars* and *Empire Strikes Back*? Is it just me or do you see the same, or did I miss something? Is this common knowledge to everyone else? Everyone should have a look and see if they agree, as it certainly is a puzzle.

I am also a big Cynthia Rothrock fan and I know there are a few more films I need to get. I have: *China O'Brien 1+2, Above The law 1+2, Martial Law, Karate Cop, Top Squad, Honor And Glory, Guardian Angel, Angel Of Fury, Triple Cross, Fight To Win, Irresistible Force, City Cops/Beyond The Law, No Retreat No Surrender 2, Lady Dragon*, and *Shanghai Express*.

Those are the ones I have, and I know of a few more out there:- *24 hours To Midnight, Prince Of The Sun, Rage And Honour 1+2, Fast Getaway 1+2.*

Are there any others which I can get as I really want to complete my collection?

Thanks a lot and keep up the good work - I enjoyed the Michelle Yeoh interview and the Hong Kong Retro was excellent.

Daniel Peach, Cononley, West Yorkshire.

Yes, to the endless confusion of neophyte Hong Kong film fans, there are two Tony Leungs: Leung Kar-fai, best-known for his role in The Lover, *and Leung Chi-wai, best-known for starring in* Hard Boiled. *With this vital piece of evidence, you can now catalogue your collection accordingly. When you say you're a big Cynthia Rothrock fan, how big are you, exactly? Just kidding! I wouldn't bother getting* 24 Hours To Midnight, *but the rest are available on sell-through video. Glad you enjoy our H.K. coverage! - Bey*

fan club

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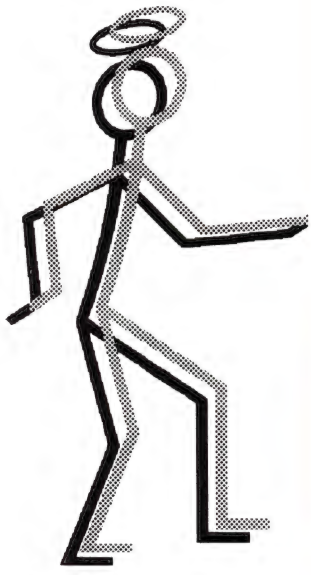
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To be in with a chance to win, simply answer the following three questions:

1) Name two actors who have played The Saint on television.

2) Philip Noyce directed which two films with Harrison Ford?

3) In which film did Val Kilmer co-star with Peter Cushing?

Easy, or devilishly hard? As soon as you think you know the correct answers, simply send them in on a postcard to Impact, Revenue Chambers, St. Peter's Street, Huddersfield HD1 1DL.

ROOS YU AND Kung fu

WARRIORS OF VIRTUE HOPS, FLIPS, AND KICKS

Patrick Leung checks out this East/West martial arts costume adventure

Warriors Of Virtue is a film quite evidently aimed at the widest possible audience. Like the property it most closely resembles, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *Warriors* is a toy line in search of a plot. However, where *TMNT* took costumed Hong Kong stuntmen onto the American streets, *WOV* takes an all-American boy into the wondrous world of Chinese myth. Fans of Hong Kong's fantastique features, typified by *Warriors'* director Ronnie Yu's earlier *Bride With White Hair*, will feel much at home in the land of Tao. However, more importantly, mainstream audiences will be dazzled by the unique blend of sound, light and fury crafted by Yu and his frequent collaborator, cinematographer Peter Pao. In terms of stylised kung fu fighting, *WOV* has more in common with Tsui Hark's *Once Upon*



Ryan (Mario Yedidia) with his furry friends.

A Time In China than it does any American made martial arts actioner. Hopefully, this strange brew will become an acquired taste for worldwide moviegoers.

Anyone who saw Chuck Norris' *Sidekicks* will feel a certain *deja vu* during the opening scenes, in which we meet troubled high school kid Ryan Jeffers (Mario Yedidia), and his Chinese kung fu cook mentor Ming (Dennis *Big Trouble In Little China* Dun). Ming entrusts Jeffers with a magic book, one that will help him discover his own inner power. Little does Ryan realise that this is his passport into a mystic land of adventure.

The film really kicks into gear when Ryan is transported to Tao, where he encounters the beauteous Elvsia (Marley Shelton) and the ancient Master Chung (Chao-li Chi). They warn him about the evil Komodo (Angus Macfadyen), who is planning to drain the energy from somewhere called the Lifesprings.

These Lifesprings are defended by the titular *Warriors Of Virtue*, five formidable kung fu fighting kangeroo warriors. Each of the five embodies a different traditional value and a classical kung fu style. Ryan realises that these are the same characters and the same place Ming had described to him when he entrusted Ryan with the book, which is the fabled Manuscript Of Legend. This volume holds the key to defeating Komodo, and the 'roo warriors are horrified when it falls into the hands of the villian. Ryan is forced to find courage hidden deep within himself in order to join forces with he Warriors and save Tao.

Just as *Superman* revolved around whether you believe a man could fly, *Warriors Of Virtue* has to prove that a kangeroo can fight. In this regard, it's a winner, with these five joeys performing traditional Chinese martial arts with a grace that even the aformentioned Turtles would envy. In this case of Ninja versus Shaolin, the Chinese art comes out

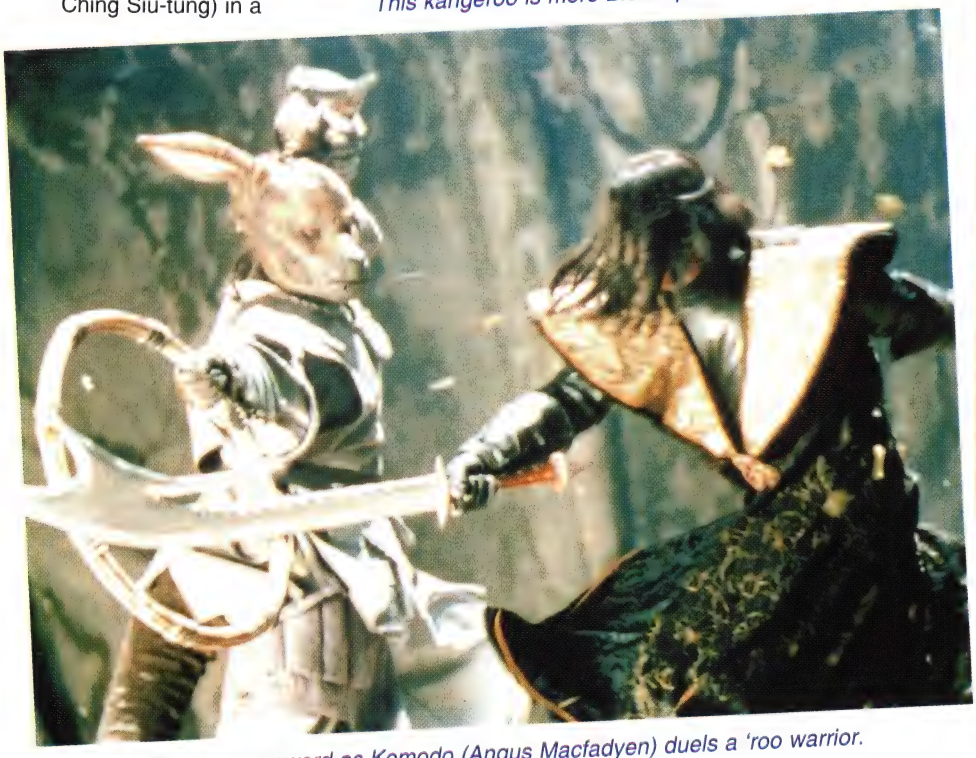


The evil Komodo crouches over a fallen foe.

ahead. The actual fight choreography was handled by Tsui Siu Ming, a veteran martial arts actor/director best-known for *Buddhist Fist* and *Bury Me High*. Ironically, the costumed American performers who play the 'roos when they are not fighting, and therefore have an easier job, are credited more prominently than the Chinese stuntmen who allowed these Warriors of Virtue to flip, flop and fly. The film gives international audiences their first real taste of Hong Kong fantastique action (a style pioneered by director Ching Siu-tung) in a mainstream feature.



This kangeroo is more Bloodsport *than 'Down Sport'.*



Ring versus sword as Komodo (Angus Macfadyen) duels a 'roo warrior.

Incidentally, not all of the action revolves around the martial arts marsupials. The showdown between Master Chung and Komodo is a magnificently stylised setpiece that looks like it was lifted wholesale from *Swordsman 2* or one of the other modern classics of Hong Kong swordplay cinema.

Cinematographer Peter Pao paints light with his usual rich camera strokes, providing the right contrast between the dull tones of our own world when compared to the wonders of Tao. The lost world itself, designed by Oscar winner Eugenio Zanetti, looks like a cross between Yoda's Dagobah, Ridley Scott's setting for *Legend* and the backdrop for Yu's *Bride With White Hair.*

As ever, the human cast take a backseat to the creatures and the creativity. Yedidia and Macfadyen do what they can with their sterotypical very good guy/very bad guy roles, but the real acting honours go to Chao, who imbues Chung with some real presence.



Bridge over a troubled Tao.



Swear upon my sword: The Warriors united.

Warriors Of Virtue isn't a film that allows ambivalence. You either buy into this world, these heroes, this style, or you don't. Undoubtedly, the growing fan following of Hong Kong actioners will be in their element. However, a film of this quality demands that a far broader audience suspends its disbelief.



BROTHERS IN LAW

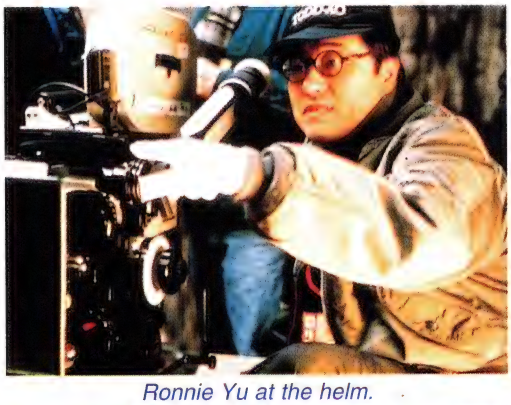
Is there a doctor in the house?

Warriors Of Virtue was conceived by the four Law brothers, all of whom are doctors. Dennis, Ronald, Christopher and Jeremy were raised in Hong Kong but educated in the West, and brought this East/West sensibility to their first film venture. "Throughtout our lives, my brothers and I have seen thousands of Hong Kong style kung fu films, with their own unique appeal," reveals Dennis. "We wanted to share that same action-packed, highly stylised Chinese type of martial arts with today's moviegoers."

Though they shared a love for kung fu flicks, the Laws had their own favourite sub-genre. "The type of kung fu movie we were enthralled with were far more stylistic than the Bruce Lee movies Western cinema audiences are used to," remembers Chris. "Choosing the more stylised Chinese type of action gave us a different avenue to explore."

Okay, so why kangeroos?

"We had decided on an animal-human hybrid," he continues, "and I began to think how kangeroos fight and kick by nature, and it became obvious to me."



Ronnie Yu at the helm.



The kangeroos each get a head for rehearsal.

The five Warriors are embued with the traditional Chinese virtues of benevolence, righteousness, order, wisdom and loyalty, and the elements of earth, water, metal, wood and fire. "The idea of the virtue being the core of the character and the element defining his or her outward appearance gave the project a solid foundation upon which we could build the story," says Ron. "(Director) Ronny Yu, being Asian, educated in the United States and currently residing in Sydney, Australia, could truly understand and capture both the Eastern and Western cultures echoed in this project. We also knew we neeeded a director with a strong visual sense of this story. Ronny is a very visual director."

"One of the reasons I wanted to take on this project is that it's an action fantasy," explains Yu, who also helmed Brandon Lee's debut, *Legacy Of Rage*. "It's not just punching and kicking. It's about a magical journey, an awakening of this kid. This has a positive message behind it."

"(Ronny) has a lot of experience with Hong Kong style action," observes Dennis Law, "and he is one of the few directors who is fluent in Chinese and English. It was clear to me from the beginning that he was virtually the only director who could make this film."

Yu's bilingual skills were imperative, as the film was shot on location in Vancover and on a massive Beijing soundstage. When it came to designing the look of the titular heroes, the Laws had preliminary designs done by a Denver-based fine artist. These illustrations, used in early promotional art for the film, were executed in a children's storybook style, in contrast to the cartoony depictions of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. The original designs had the creatures look more like real kangeroos, but the producers soon realised that the bottom-heavy design of the beast itself wasn't appropriate for the graceful kung fu-ery demanded of the characters. The 'roos were made real by heavy costumes made of urethane, spandex, denim, foam and wires, and weighed over 60 pounds.

Beside the basic 'roo suit, the characters wear ornate kung fu warrior outfits. As with the Turtles, the heads of the 'roos were animatronically operated. "I had never worked with animatronics before," admits Ronny Yu. "I've worked with temperamental actors, but working with animatronics and the many people needed to control them was more difficult than directing any prima donna. Organisation and communication were the key."

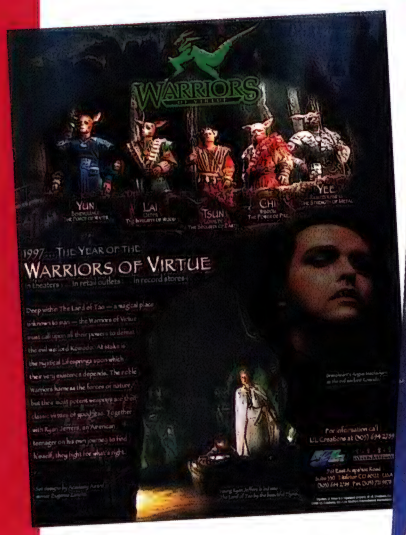
The task of putting these manbeasts in motion fell to Hong Kong action choreographer Tsui Siu-ming. "I set out to show audiences an East-meets-West style of martial arts, with all its sky-high leaps and swift, sequential movements," he reveals. "The stuntmen's abilities were greatly reduced by the heavy suits, large tails and masks that obscured their vision. Some stunts required landing in or jumping out of water, which meant incomfortably soaking the suits."

Ron Law was satisfied with the finished result, describing it as "suspenseful hand-to-hand combat (with) thrilling airborne twirling and twisting motions." Making the 'roo warriors fly involved the usual Hong Kong practice of wirework. However, the stuntmen being 'flown' were obviosly far heavier than the uncostumed variety. "I would not consider the stunts difficult," says Rony Yu. "I would consider them impossible. It challenged my patience, but somehow it all came together and worked."

If there were any accidents on the set, at least there were four doctors in the house: the producers!

East *to* West

Which is best?





There was a time when the only Chinese people making a good living in Hollywood were James Wong Howe and Keye Luke. In more recent times, performers like Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan attracted cult audiences, but never made films in Tinseltown. The sudden boom in public awareness of Hong Kong action cinema has changed the scene forever. The journey to The Golden Mountain continues, with Hong Kong filmmakers pulled to Hollywood like dragons to a pearl. How does their scorecard look? Here's a rundown on who has done what or will do what, where, when.

FILM TITLE	DIRECTOR	CAST	THE FANS SAID..	THE CRITICS SAID
In the can:				
Hard Target	John Woo	Van Damme	It's no 'Better Tomorrow'	OK, so he CAN shoot an action scene.
Warriors Of Virtue	Ronnie Yu	Rooz aplenty	Once Upon A Time In The Outback	The Turtles live!
Maximum Risk	Ringo Lam	Van Damme	More Lam than Van	One slick flick
Broken Arrow	John Woo	John Travolta	More John Wayne than John Woo	Just like a real American movie
Double Team	Tsui Hark	Van Damme	The best slambang Van Dammer	Huh?
An Alan Smithee Film	Arthur Hillar	Jackie Chan	Not enough Chan the man	He's arrived!
Once A Thief	John Woo	Michael Wong	Bring back Cherrie Chung	Hmmmm
Coming soon:				
Mr. Magoo	Stanley Tong	Leslie Nielsen	Huh?	Wait and see
Knock Off	Tsui Hark	Van Damme	Will they never learn?	Hark! Who goes there?
The Replacement Killers	Antoine Fuqua	Chow Yun Fat	The Don lives!	Chow Yun who?
Rush Hour	Brett Ratner	Jackie Chan	It's got to be better than *Cannonball Run*	But can he act?

Tarz Stillz

X001 The Big Boss



X002 The Way of the Dragon



X003 The Way of the Dragon



X004 Game of Death



X005 The Way of the Dragon



X006 The Way of the Dragon



X007 Game of Death



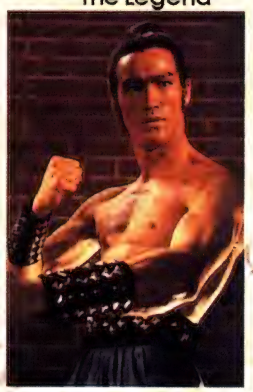
X008 Game of Death



X009 Bruce Lee The Legend



X010 Bruce Lee The Legend



X011 Tower of Death



X012 Project A



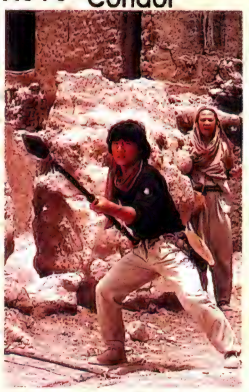
X013 Project A



X014 Armour of God



X015 Operation Condor



X016 Police Story 3



X017 Police Story



X018 Police Story 3



X019 Police Story 3



X020 Once Upon A Time In China 2



Tarz

All stills £4.95 plus P&P. For order form see page 22.

IMPACT


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F001 The Big Boss



F002 Fist of Fury



F003 The Way of the Dragon



F004Game of Death



F005The Young Master



F006 Police Story



F007 Project A,Part Two



F008 DragonsForever



F009 Police Story3



F010 Operation Condor



F011 A Better Tomorrow



F012 City On Fire



F013 The Killer



F014 Once A Thief



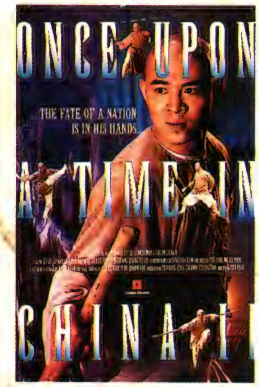
F015 A BetterTomorrow 3



Once Upon A
F016 Time In China



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F018 EasternCondors



A Chinese
F019 Ghost Story



F020 Naked Killer



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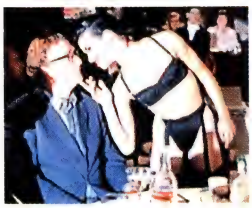
The trouble with HARRY?

Michael Caine is back as Harry Palmer, 32 years after *The Ipcress File* made him 'Mr Sex in Specs'. Tony Earnshaw reports on the re-birth of the spy in the raincoat.

Not too long ago, Michael Caine described Harry Palmer, the seedy, squalid British secret agent who made him a superstar back in the '60s, as "a wimp".

Admittedly, Caine was plugging another movie about another M15 spook - Harry Anders in the forgettable *Blue Ice* - and was anxious not to have Anders compared with Palmer. Nevertheless, movie buffs everywhere contrasted the bespectacled Anders with the bespectacled Palmer. The link, quite obviously, was Caine. There was no getting away from it.

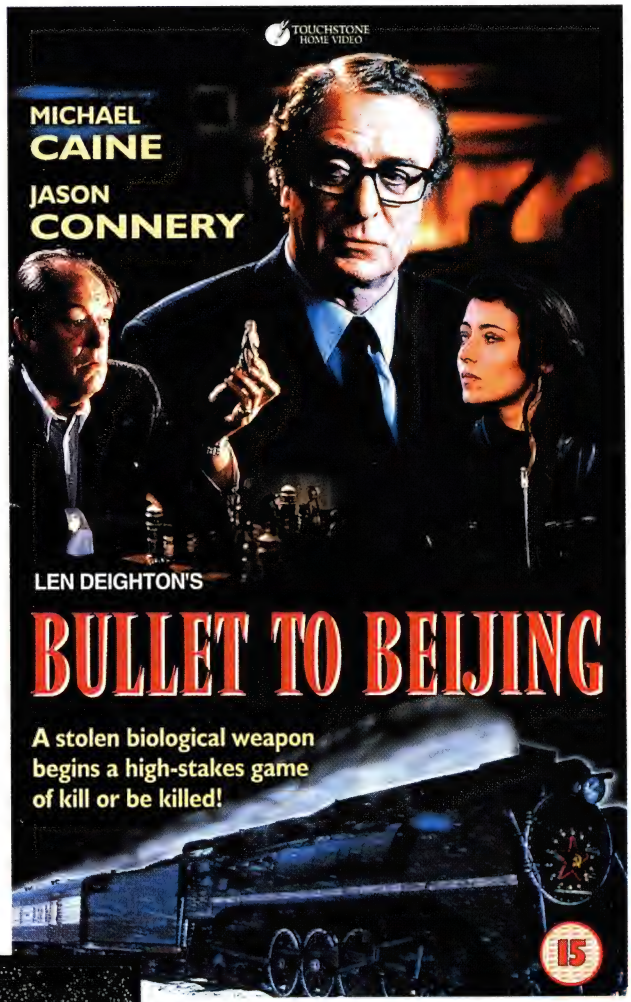


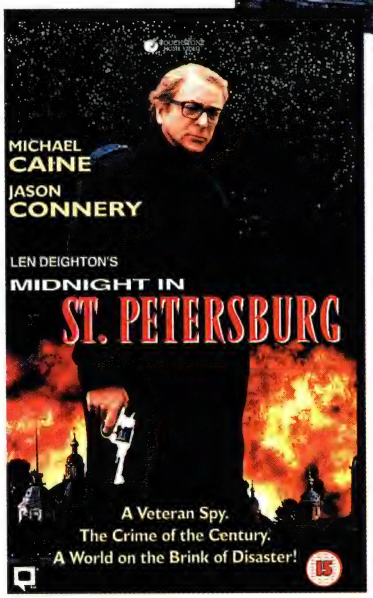


"Harry Anders was like a 'Dirty Harry' Palmer, because he's very, very tough. Harry Palmer was a wimp with glasses, and a victim. Harry Anders was much, much tougher and certainly nobody's victim," said Caine.

Now, almost five years later, Caine has returned as Harry Palmer in two new films: *Bullet to Beijing* and *Mission to St Petersburg*. The films went straight to video for Touchstone. That in itself is a warning sign in big flashing neon letters.

Just like Kurt Russell, who returned as Snake Plissken in a lacklustre sequel to *Escape From New York*, Caine has found himself embroiled in a couple of pretty tatty second-rate TV movies which, though originally destined for the cinema circuit, were obviously just too weak to survive a fist fight with the likes of *Broken Arrow*, *The Rock* or *Ransom*.





Throw in a distinctly B-movie cast - Jason Connery, Mia Sara, Michael Sarrazin, Burt Kwouk and Michael Gambon, with Connery, Gambon and Sarrazin returning for the duration of both films - and this series of two limp action flicks immediately gives away its guilty secret: it's lousy.

To be honest, *Bullet to Beijing* isn't *that* bad. It scampers along at a nifty pace and has some interesting things to say about the Russian Mafia - the real powerbrokers in the 'new' Russia and more powerful than the police, army and old KGB thrown together.

It presents Palmer as an anachronism - a Cold War relic out of touch with the hi-tech '90s and barely distinguishable amidst a motley collection of fellow spies, spooks and seedy contacts. Still, there is a tangible '60s atmosphere, as if Russia (where the majority of the movie is set) and Palmer, are stuck in the past - dinosaurs from the past whose only road is that to final extinction.

Caine slips easily back into the role which made his name. Palmer remains as tacky as he always was. Years of blending into the background have helped him survive, yet, like James Bond, everyone seems to know who he is, and they're all after his head. His co-stars, however, with the exception of Connery, merely wander in and out of the plot, which has Palmer ducking from numerous assassination attempts, jumping aboard the bullet train to Beijing and hunting down a synthetic germ warfare agent "so lethal it can destroy an entire population". Ho-hum.

There is a distinct lack of pace about both films, though *Bullet* at least begins promisingly. As a hero, Palmer/Caine lacks zip. He just ain't got what it takes. Consequently much of the tough stuff is left to Connery, while Caine ambles around wondering what the hell's going on most of the time. "Why are they trying to kill me?" he repeats. Obviously the scriptwriter was down the pub at that point.

The original Harry Palmer movies - *The Ipcress File*, *Funeral in Berlin* and *Billion Dollar Brain* - worked because audiences in the 1960s could identify with the situations and characters they were seeing. The Berlin Wall was firmly in place. People were being killed as they tried to escape East Germany. NATO and the Eastern Bloc were really at war; it's just that no-one wanted to admit it.



When he was making the films, Caine lamented the death of the type of films in which he's built his reputation as one of Britain's few film superstars. "Why don't people make films like *The Ipcress File* anymore?" he said.

The answer's easy. No-one wants to see them anymore. They're passe. Old-fashioned. Hackneyed. Dull. Thirty years on, everything has changed.

Only Caine has remained the same. And Harry Palmer.

FAR EAST VIDEO SCENE

Chenh Nim looks at the latest in Far East action video.



At present there are only three types of ratings to categories motion pictures in Hong Kong for cinema viewers.

The first of Category I, which is similar to Us or PGs used in the U.K. which should be fit for all ages. Next step up is Category IIA and IIB which is the equivalent of 12's or 15's with some violence and very mild nudity. And the last one is, you guessed it, Category III, similar to the 18 certificates and by using this option the film makers of Hong Kong have the freedom to go beyond the outlines of conventional film making.

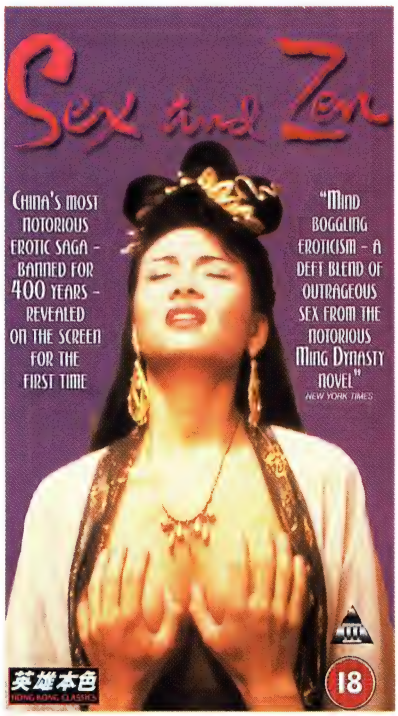
Hong Kong has always been a country which can tolerate large quantities of over the edge violence but find sex and nudity a tad sensitive, to the point that it's non-existent. However, come the early 90's the Hong Kong censors introduced another certification, Category III which allowed film makers to push the boundaries even further.

Sex and Zen

Sex and Zen, probably one of the most talked about and successful Category III films in Hong Kong film history has at long last landed on U.K. video shelves courtesy of the big boys at MIA's 'Hong Kong Classics'.

The plot (and yes, there is a plot) follows the journeys of Sheng (Lawrence Ng), a scholar who is stubbornly determined to prove that the teachings of Zen philosophy of abstinence is incorrect and as a result sets out to conquer as many women as he can without remorse.

Unfortunately for Sheng, due to his shortcomings it is believed he will not be up for the task (erm!, so to speak). As a result, upon meeting up with a weird doctor he decides to exchange his manhood for that of a stallion (don't laugh, there's more to come!). This he believes will equip him for the task ahead. But will Sheng's carefree lifestyle eventually catch up with him? And can he disprove the value of Zen philosophy of abstinence?



What follows is some of the most eye-popping, outrageous and bizarre sexual scenes ever seen on screen, as can only be expected from the cinemas of Hong Kong.

Sex and Zen is an adaptation of the 17th Century Ming Dynasty novel, directed with comical flair and imagination by Johnny Mak, and stars some of Hong Kong's most popular Category III actresses such as the busty Amy Yip (*Erotic Ghost Story, To be Number One*) and the deadly Carrier Ng (*Naked Killer*).

For those who care about the artistic aspect of the film (not many of you I presume), the look of the film is quite stunning, making full use of the Ming Dynasty costumes (for the time they're on the stars anyway).

The only problem with most Category III films is the almost non-existence of the storyline (although I can't imagine the majority of viewers are bothered about it). But with better storyline and characterisation I feel the genre can be pushed to another level, to the likes of Hollywood's *Basic Instinct*, *Nine And A Half Weeks*, etc.. Instead of an excuse for a bonk-fest.

Overall, a very entertaining film which has to be seen to be believed.

Naked Assassins

God knows why this film was given the English title of *Naked Assassins*, because with such a title one would expect it to be a *Naked Killer*-type of film, which it most definitely is NOT.

Instead, *Naked Assassins*, released by Eastern Heroes, is a mish-mash melodrama telling the tail of a love triangle between playboy Tony, played with little effort by Thong Tsan Yip (who incidentally was plagued with this type of role in his film career), his girlfriend Sandy, and her mother. Amongst this backdrop there is a further sub-plot which involves the struggle for power within the horse racing arena.

The story begins with Tony and Sandy returning to Hong Kong from studying in the United States to celebrate her birthday. Upon meeting Sandy's mother, Tony is smitten by her beauty and therefore an affair evolves. As the relationship continues, the world around them also crumbles both in terms of the relationship with mother and daughter and also their business.

Naked Assassins, placed under the Category III genre, lacks the titillation and eroticism famed for this genre. This film, in my view

should definitely not be included in the Category III rating as most of the nudity or violence is nowhere near shocking status. In fact it is quite tame in comparison to some Category III films I've seen.



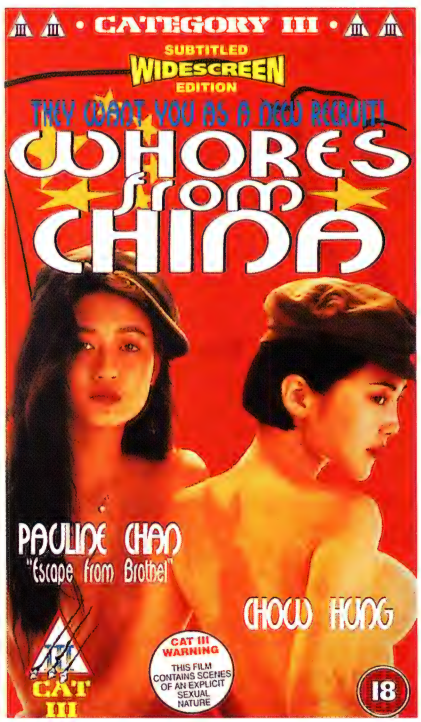
As mentioned earlier, the plot is very slow and confusing coupled with poor acting, especially the mother role which seems to be very one dimensional. The direction and style of the film is very mediocre, nothing special at all. All these elements make this film one to miss.

Eastern Heroes in the past has released some very good and innovative films but I feel they made a mistake letting this slip through their doors.

Whores From China

This subtly titled film released by Eastern Heroes centres around a young mainland girl, Ying, arriving in Hong Kong to stay with a distant relative, hoping to make something of herself in a capitalist society.

But no sooner does she enter the house than she is attacked by the son of the family, she manages to fight him off and as a result is kicked out of the house to fend for herself. Eventually, she finds work in a large department store selling make-up and meeting a young man, Kent, who cares for her but yet again she is indecently attacked by her manager. Though the young man promised to take care of her, she is still not content and decides to leave him to find her fortune.



She next finds a job selling insurance, and as a result meets a rich man and marries him, but just as life is sweet, her ex-lover returns to haunt her, blackmailing her with a raunchy video they made. As the threats intensify and the wedding day gets closer, a final confrontation is inevitable.

The storyline is weak, for all this serves merely as a backdrop for a load of nudity and pointless bonking. The portrayal of the damsel in distress is watchable as ever, as is the boyfriend turned psycho bad-ass. The only problem I have with the film is its portrayal of the male gender, who are either all sex maniacs attacking good looking girls or obsessed boyfriends (I hear the girls screaming "Right on!"), but come on girls, let's be fair.

Watching the film, I can't help but think it is very hollow, neither shocking nor exciting as is expected of the Category III genre. A very mediocre effort.



HONG KONG RETRO



Swimming to Valhalla

A critical reassessment of Hong Kong's one-armed movie bandit. Bey Logan checks out the neglected canon of Jimmy Wang Yu.



Wang Yu bales out a foe in One Armed Boxer.



Former swimming champ Wang Yu takes a dive in Beach Of The War Gods.



Wang Yu is a one man, one-armed army in The One Armed Boxer..

It's hard to imagine a hotter star grown more cold. In the 70s, Jimmy Wang Yu was the biggest name in Hong Kong action cinema before striking out into the independent market. He was *The One-Armed Swordsman*, *The Chinese Boxer*, *The One-Armed Boxer* and *The Man from Hong Kong*. He was the foremost screen fighter of his era. However, despite all of the above, Wang Yu has become the forgotten man of Hong Kong cinema. None of his classic films are available to rent on laser disc or video in his adopted home town. In the minds of western fans of kung fu cinema, he's become a footnote in the Bruce Lee story, the unarmed combat star who paved the way for The Little Dragon's return and then failed to capitalise on the international martial arts movie boom that followed Lee's passing. Given the influence his films had on the genre, the work of Jimmy Wang Yu is well worthy of reappraisal.

Wang Yu was born Wong Jing Kuen in the southern Chinese city of Shanghai. One of his childhood friends was his future *Golden Swallow* co-star, Cheng Pei Pei. He became a champion swimmer (I observed in my book *Hong Kong Action cinema* that this was the only time in his career he was more effective with two arms than one) and legend has it that this is (literally!) how he came to Hong Kong. In the Crown colony, he played water polo. At the time, the heads of Shaw Brothers studio were looking for athletic young men to join their actor's training programme. On a whim, Wong Jing Kuen applied, was accepted, and emerged from the programme as 'Wang Yu'. He made his starring debut in 1964 in director Chang Cheh's *Tiger Boy*. It was with this director, and in the swordplay genre, that the actor made his name. Wang Yu starred in several memorable Shaw Brothers blade flicks, including *Temple of the Red Lotus*, *The Trail of the Broken Blade*, *Twin Swords* and *Magnificent Trio*. Of these films, two were truly ground-breaking efforts.

Nineteen-sixty-seven's *The One-Armed Swordsman*, directed by Chang Cheh, introduced the concept of mono-limbed invincibility to Hong Kong action cinema. Fang Gang (Wang Yu) is accepted as a disciple by the master swordsman Qi Rufeng. When Qi's daughter becomes jealous, she maims him. Fang goes into retreat to perfect a one-armed swordplay style, studying a manual entitled *Illustrated Instructions for the left hand*. On his return, he rescues his betrayer from captivity, and uses his newfound skills to save her father's life.

Looked at today, the swordplay scenes seem stagey and slow. It's hard to imagine the impact they had in 1967. This was the golden era of the Shaw Brothers swordplay flick. The studio was looking for a new hero, and found it in Wang Yu. The film was a huge hit, grossing the then amazing sum of over one million Hong Kong dollars. It inspired numerous sequels, some with Wang Yu (*Return of the One Armed Swordsman*, *The One-Armed Swordsman versus Zatoichi*, *One-Armed Against Nine Killers*), some with David Chiang (*The New One-Armed Swordsman*) and, much later, a Tsui Hark-directed remake, *The Blade*, with Chiu Man-chuk.

Golden Swallow, a sequel to King Hu's *Come Drink With Me*, was released in the U.S. with the misleading title of *Girl with the Thunderbolt Kick*, an attempt to pass off Cheng Pei Pei as an Angela Mao-type heroine. In fact, it's a swordplay flick, in which Cheng's Golden Swallow plays a supporting role to Wang Yu's Silver Roc. The drama scenes are very static, but the action, when it happens, is extraordinary. Wang's scar-faced, white-clad killer carves his way through his foes with stylised bloodletting reminiscent of the Japanese chanbara flicks. A grim torture chamber sequence has a gore score that only Chang Cheh, never a man to go easy on the ketchup, could manage. Lau Kar-leung provides the magnificent choreography. Stand-out scenes include a seemingly endless overhead shot during the aforementioned torture sequences, and Roc's finale battle up the famed Shaws' studio steps. There's plenty of intriguing camerawork, some of it's with a cinema verite feel. The film is rightly regarded as a classic of the genre, and one of Chang Cheh's finest works.

Wang's directorial debut, *The Chinese Boxer*, plays like a chanbara flick without swords, a spaghetti Western without guns. Directly inspired by the success of the Japanese film *Judo Saga*, its stylised camerawork and choreography revitalised the kung fu movie genre. Set in Northern China during the early days of the republic, the film matched its Chinese hero, Lei (Wang) with experts from different foreign martial arts style. Though it still features the flying effects seen in the swordplay flicks, *The Chinese Boxer* was one of the first films in the genre to depict arduous martial arts training and semi-realistic combat scenes. Wang's character masters the Iron Palm technique, which was to become a regular device of the genre, to fell his foes. Tang Chia, one of Chang Cheh's regular choreographers, served as action director on the film.

Wang's decision to break his contract with Shaw Brothers to join a new company, Golden Harvest, set up by a former Shaw's producer, Raymond Chow was a *cause celebre* in its day. It's rumoured that, when he left Shaw Brothers, Chow took the original copy of Wang's contract with him, thereby making it impossible for Run Run Shaw to sue successfully.

The original *One Armed Swordsman* had been inspired by Yang Guo, a character from a Chinese novel, Spencer Tracy's one-armed war veteran *Bad Day at Black Rock* and Chuck Connors' character in the 1965 TV series *Broken Sabre*. Wang Yu took the concept one step further for *The One-Armed Boxer*. In this 1971 film, Wang's character plays the senior student at a kung fu school challenged by an international posse of weird and wonderful martial arts masters. In the ensuing showdown, he loses a limb, then trains his remaining arm to take revenge. It's evident that Wang's director's cut was too long, and so a middle, exposition section of the film is told using a series of still images. The film marked one of the few times that stalwart Shaw Brothers choreographer Lau Kar-leung worked for Golden Harvest. Wang followed *One-Armed Swordsman* with the swordplay film in excelsis, *Beach of the War Gods*, an epic reminiscent of the classic Japanese samurai flicks. It's set in the year 1556. Wang plays Hsiao Feng, a Chinese patriot rousing a village to defend itself against Japanese invaders. As with his previous hits, Wang both directed and wrote the screenplay, placing him in direct competition with Bruce Lee, who was making his own directorial debut with *Way of the Dragon*. The rugged coastline shown in the film is situated in Taiwan, where the movie was shot. The film's twenty minute finale presents Chinese swordplay cinema at its most epic.

A Man Called Tiger was originally intended to be the third collaboration between director Lo Wei and Bruce Lee. When it became apparent that Lee was going his own way, Lo replaced him with Wang Yu, and flew to Japan to shoot this contemporary martial arts actioner. The plot sags, but the crisp cinematography looks newly minted. Our hero is an international agent infiltrating the yakuza. Lo Wei regulars James Tien and Han Ying-chieh are also on hand. In the Japanese setting, Wang looks like one of those absurdly cool heroes from the local gangster flicks. A ferocious finale sees Wang become the one-LEGGED boxer, but he still wins the day. The film is extraordinarily well-made, especially when compared to the films Lo shot in the U.S. during the same period.



"My career went thatta way...": Wang Yu tells director Lo Wei.



00-trouble: Wang in Japan for Man Called Tiger.

An attempt was made to launch Jimmy Wang Yu in the international market with *The Man From Hong Kong*, and English language production helmed by Australian director Brian Trenchard Smith. It featured an epic duel between Wang and choreographer Samo Hung, staged on Ayers Rock, an extended motorcycle chase, a kung fu school showdown and a finale that saw Jimmy hand-gliding into the villainous George Lazenby's lair. Despite all of the above, the film performed below expectations, at home and abroad. Wang's attempt at a *Supercop Rumbles Down Under* flick was many years too early. Bruce Lee was too fresh in the minds of western fans for them to accept another Chinese action star as anything but a pale copy.

After his film career faltered, Wang Yu became an increasingly powerful figure in the Taiwanese underworld. Life imitated art when, in 1981, he was attacked in a Taipei restaurant by four blade-wielding youths. Today, Wang seems to have mellowed, participating in a light-hearted skit at the 1995 Taiwanese film awards. He still produces the occasional movie, but is perhaps best known as being the father of singer Linda Wong!

Wang was never a martial arts performer to match Bruce Lee, Angela Mao or Carter Wong. Like a prototype Super Mario Brother, he hops across the screen, arms swinging. As befits a former swimmer, he seemed more intent on front crawling his foes to death. More important than his fighting skill, though, was the sheer power of his indomitable screen persona, and the skill with which the best of his films were executed. It's easy to see why international audiences resisted efforts to launch him as a new Little Dragon, harder to see why support for his career has been reduced to the sound of one hand clapping.

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S038086	U	DAM BUSTERS	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO-LU
LUM2005	U	DANGER WITHIN	10.99	LUMIERE HOME VIDEO
SG3054	U	DARK ANGEL (GEMS)	8.99	SAMUEL GOLDWYN-VIDEO
CVR30229	15	DAS BOOT (THE BOAT) (WS)	12.99	COLUMBIA PREMIERE 3/
PES38006	18	DEERHUNTER	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO-LU
101450	PG	DESERT FOX	10.99	FOX VIDEO
131350	U	DESERT RATS (CBS/FOX)	12.99	FOX VIDEO
S050008	15	DIRTY DOZEN 1	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
S050625	PG	DIRTY DOZEN 2-NEXT MISSION	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
PES99691	PG	DIVE BOMBER	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S050362	PG	DUNKIRK (COLLECTOR'S ED)	12.99	MGM/UA
0842563	15	EAGLE HAS LANDED (FEATURE)	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
113350	PG	ENEMY BELOW	10.99	FOX VIDEO
CC7050	PG	FAREWELL TO THE KING	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
PES99681	PG	FIGHTING 69TH	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
CC1084	U	FIGHTING SEABEES	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
ODY738	U	FIRST OF THE FEW	7.99	ODYSSEY SALE
CC7115	PG	FLYING TIGERS	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
CC1143	15	FORCE 10 FROM NAVARONE	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
LUM2117	U	FOREMAN WENT TO FRANCE	9.99	LUMIERE HOME VIDEO
PES11760	18	FULL METAL JACKET	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
VHR3019	PG	GALLIPOLI (WS)	10.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
PES99232	PG	GREAT ESCAPE	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S052163	PG	GREAT ESCAPE (COLL.ED) (WS)	12.99	MGM/UA
S001002	PG	GREEN BERETS	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
EVV1090	PG	GUNBUS	10.99	E.V.SPECIALS
CVR20010	PG	GUNS OF NAVARONE (WS)	12.99	COLUMBIA TRISTAR
CC1154	18	HAMBURGER HILL	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
SPT71065	PG	HELL IN THE PACIFIC	5.99	SPOTLIGHT - BRAVEWOR
CVR10329	U	HELLCATS OF THE NAVY	10.99	COLUMBIA TRISTAR CLA
CC1027	PG	HEROES OF TELEMARK	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
S038152	U	I WAS MONTY'S DOUBLE	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO-LU
S038094	PG	ICE COLD IN ALEX	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO-LU
RCC3066	U	IN WHICH WE SERVE	6.99	RANK
MSS1044	18	JUNGLE HEAT	9.99	MOONSTONE PICTURES /
S050168	PG	KELLY'S HEROES	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
359350	PG	LAST DAYS OF PATTON	10.99	FOX VIDEO
VIA7517	18	LAST PLATOON	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAIN-M
VPD414	18	LEATHERNECKS	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAINME
S038158	PG	LONG & THE SHORT & THE TALL	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO-LU
102150	PG	LONGEST DAY	10.99	FOX VIDEO
WS102150	PG	LONGEST DAY (WS)	12.99	FOX VIDEO WIDESCREEN
BS102150	PG	LONGEST DAY (BOX SET) (WS)	19.99	FOX VIDEO
CVR24221	15	MIDNIGHT CLEAR	10.99	COLUMBIA TRISTAR
93282	15	MISSING IN ACTION 1	10.99	ABBEY HOME ENTERTAIN
CALD012	18	MISSION KILL	12.99	CALECO DIRECT /SGS
NR5014	15	MISSION OF THE SHARK	10.99	NEW AGE SPECIALS
VPD331	18	MISSION TERMINATE	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAINME
ODY621	PG	NAKED AND THE DEAD	10.99	ODYSSEY SALE
DD561	15	NAM-TOUR OF DUTY	10.99	D.D DISTRIBUTION
CVR30199	15	NIGHT OF THE GENERALS	10.99	COLUMBIA TRISTAR
PES99336	PG	OBJECTIVE BURMA	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
AHP5013	18	ODD ANGRY SHOT	12.99	ARTHOUSE PRODUCTIONS
LUM2115	E	OVERLORD (GIFT SET)(2 TPS)	13.99	LUMIERE HOME VIDEO
100550	PG	PATTON	10.99	FOX VIDEO
WS100550	PG	PATTON (WS)	12.99	FOX VIDEO WIDESCREEN
VPD444	18	PHANTOM SOLDIERS	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAINME
CVR21107	15	PLATOON	10.99	COLUMBIA PREMIERE 3/
CVR31107	15	PLATOON (WS)	12.99	COLUMBIA TRISTAR
PEV31096	18	PLATOON LEADER	7.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO SP
S035612	18	PLATOON LEADER/RIVER OF DEA.	12.99	MGM/UA
VHR1566	15	RAID ON ROMMEL (WS)	9.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
S050499	15	RED DAWN	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
PES99543	U	RUN SILENT RUN DEEP	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
CVR10663	PG	SAHARA (BOGART)	10.99	COLUMBIA TRISTAR CLA
CC1001	PG	SANDS OF IWO JIMA	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
VC3435	PG	SANDS OF IWO JIMA/BACK TO B.	12.99	VIDEO COLLECTION INT
PES99349	U	SERGEANT YORK	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
181250	U	SINK THE BISMARK	12.99	FOX VIDEO
VHR2604	PG	STALAG 17	9.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
EVS1149	15	STALINGRAD	14.99	ENTERTAINMENT IN VID
EVS1150	15	STALINGRAD (WS)	14.99	ENTERTAINMENT IN VID
112850	PG	TAPS	10.99	FOX VIDEO
S038301	U	THEY WHO DARE	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO-LU
VHR1567	PG	TO HELL AND BACK (WS)	9.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
6313603	PG	TOBRUK	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
101750	U	TORA!TORA!TORA!	7.99	FOX VIDEO
WS101750	U	TORA!TORA!TORA! (WS)	12.99	FOX VIDEO WIDESCREEN
DD562	15	TOUR OF DUTY 2-UNDER SIEGE	10.99	D.D DISTRIBUTION
PES99397	PG	TRAIN (WARNER)	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S054938	PG	TRAIN (WARNER) (WS)	12.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO-EL
107550	U	TWELVE O'CLOCK HIGH	10.99	FOX VIDEO
VHR2103	15	UNCOMMON VALOUR	10.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
ODY627	PG	VERBOTEN	10.99	ODYSSEY SALE
CLAS9188	18	VIETNAM (2 TAPE SET)	14.99	SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT
ODY726	15	WAR STORY (2 TAPES)	19.99	ODYSSEY SALE
RCC3052	U	WE DIVE AT DAWN	6.99	RANK
LUM2118	PG	WENT THE DAY WELL	9.99	LUMIERE HOME VIDEO
PES50137	PG	WHERE EAGLES DARE	10.99	MGM/UA
S054940	PG	WHERE EAGLES DARE (WS)	12.99	MGM/UA
LUM2119	U	WOODEN HORSE	9.99	LUMIERE HOME VIDEO
105750	PG	YOUNG LIONS	10.99	FOX VIDEO

SCIENCE FICTION

0837823	15	1984	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
CVRP51	PG	20 MILLION MILES/IT CAME FR.	10.99	COLUMBIA TRISTAR
PES50002	U	2001:A SPACE ODYSSEY	10.99	MGM/UA
PES50591	PG	2010:YEAR WE MAKE CONTACT	10.99	MGM/UA
NR5002	15	ABRAXAS	10.99	NEW AGE SPECIALS
156150	15	ABYSS	7.99	FOX VIDEO
WS156150	15	ABYSS (WS)	12.99	FOX VIDEO WIDESCREEN
WS198850	15	ABYSS (SPECIAL EDITION) (WS)	12.99	FOX VIDEO WIDESCREEN
109050	18	ALIEN	10.99	FOX VIDEO
WS109050	18	ALIEN (WS)	12.99	FOX VIDEO WIDESCREEN
559350	18	ALIEN 3-BITCH IS BACK	12.99	FOX VIDEO
WS559350	18	ALIEN 3-BITCH IS BACK (WS)	14.99	FOX VIDEO WIDESCREEN
PPSF001	18	ALIEN FACTOR	12.99	POPULAR PROGRESS RTM
158550	18	ALIEN NATION	10.99	FOX VIDEO
MSS1018	18	ALIENATOR	12.99	MOONSTONE PICTURES /
150450	18	ALIENS	10.99	FOX VIDEO
VHR1028	PG	ANDROMEDA STRAIN	10.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
EE004	PG	ATOMIC SUBMARINE	10.99	ENCORE ENTERTAINMENT
S012656	PG	BABYLON 5 (S/T)	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
VHR1006	PG	BATTLE STAR GALACTICA	10.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
PES70008	15	BLADE RUNNER	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
PES12682	15	BLADE RUNNER (DIRECTORS)(WS)	12.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
CVR30003	PG	CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF 3RD (WS)	12.99	COLUMBIA PREMIERE 3/
CVR20003	PG	CLOSE ENCOUNTERS/3RD KIND	10.99	COLUMBIA PREMIERE 3/
147650	PG	COCOON 1	10.99	FOX VIDEO
171050	PG	COCOON 2-THE RETURN	10.99	FOX VIDEO
PES31030	18	CYBORG 1	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
IM004	15	CYBORG 2087	8.16	MOVIELAND UK LTD.
0862083	18	DARK ANGEL (4 FRONT)	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
MED12842	18	DARK SIDE OF THE MOON	10.99	MEDUSA HOME VIDEO
HEN2109	PG	DARK STAR	5.99	HENDRING
101150	U	DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	10.99	FOX VIDEO
LUM2043	U	DEVIL GIRL FROM MARS	10.99	LUMIERE HOME VIDEO
142550	U	EMPIRE STRIKES BACK	10.99	FOX VIDEO
WS142550	U	EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (WS)	12.99	FOX VIDEO
149250	15	ENEMY MINE	10.99	FOX VIDEO
S051425	U	EWOKS-BATTLE FOR ENDOR	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
0880103	U	EXPLORERS	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
MSS1070	15	EXTRA TERRESTRIAL VISITORS	12.99	MOONSTONE PICTURES /
100250	U	FANTASTIC VOYAGE	10.99	FOX VIDEO
EE002		FIRST MAN INTO SPACE	10.99	ENCORE ENTERTAINMENT
CVRP52	.U	FIRST MEN IN MOON/EARTH VS F	10.99	COLUMBIA TRISTAR
EMP01952	U	FLASH GORDON CONQUERS/UNIV..	12.99	EMPIRE ENTERTAINMENT
PES50041	U	FORBIDDEN PLANET	10.99	MGM/UA
SUK22372	E	FORTY YEARS OF SCI FI TV	10.99	SIMITAR ENTERTAINMEN
0843463	PG	GODZILLA DOUBLE FEATURE V1	9.99	POLYGRAM VIDEO
0843383	15	GODZILLA DOUBLE FEATURE V2	9.99	POLYGRAM VIDEO
0843443	PG	GODZILLA TRIPLE FEATURE(2TP)	10.99	POLYGRAM VIDEO
MANL1001	15	GUNHED	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
CAS9061	15	HANGAR 18	4.99	CASTLE COMMUNICATION
0839563	18	HARDWARE	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
BBCV5135	PG	HITCH HIKERS GUIDE-COMPLETE	16.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV4751	PG	HITCH HIKERS GUIDE/GALAXY 1	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV4752	PG	HITCH HIKERS GUIDE/GALAXY 2	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
VPD418	PG	HUMAN ERROR	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAINME
EVV1159	18	INTERZONE	10.99	E.V.SPECIALS
SE9285	PG	INVADERS V1-BEACHED	12.99	SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT
SE9286	PG	INVADERS V2-THE MUTATION	12.99	SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT
SE9287	PG	INVADERS V3-THE INNOCENT	12.99	SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT
SE9288	PG	INVADERS V4-THE SAUCER	12.99	SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT
SE9293	PG	INVADERS V5-DARK OUT POST..	12.99	SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT
SE9294	PG	INVADERS V6-COUNTER ATTACK	12.99	SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT
CC7199	15	LAWNMOWER MAN	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
VA30293	15	LAWNMOWER MAN (WS)	12.99	FIRST INDEPENDENT
VA30300	15	LAWNMOWER MAN(DIR.CUT)	12.99	FIRST INDEPENDENT
ITC9850	15	LIFEPOD	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
PES50082	PG	LOGANS RUN	10.99	MGM/UA
189550	U	LOST IN SPACE 1-RELUCTANT S.	10.99	FOX VIDEO
189650	U	LOST IN SPACE 2-ISLAND IN	10.99	FOX VIDEO
189750	U	LOST IN SPACE 3-HUNGRY SEA	10.99	FOX VIDEO
EVS1089	15	LOST IN TIME	10.99	ENTERTAINMENT IN VID
PES61246	15	MAN WHO SAW TOMORROW	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
PES37159	PG	MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE	9.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
VHR1196	PG	MISFITS OF SCIENCE	10.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
BBCV5302	PG	MOONBASE 3-VOL.1	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV5375	PG	MOONBASE 3-VOL.2	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV5410	PG	MOONBASE 3-VOL.3	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
MED13082	15	MUTRONICS-THE MOVIE	10.99	MEDUSA HOME VIDEO
CVT20242	18	NEMESIS	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAINME
512050	18	NIGHT FLYERS	17.65	FOXVIDEO LTD.
BDV12654	PG	OMEGA MAN (WS)	15.99	BLUE DOLPHIN - TARTA
S020002	15	OUTLAND	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
CC7096	PG	PHILADELPHIA EXPERIMENT	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
6300463	15	PHILADELPHIA EXPERIMENT 2	10.99	POLYGRAM VIDEO
6312743	18	PROTOTYPE (POLYGRAM)	10.99	POLYGRAM VIDEO
AHP5002	15	QUIET EARTH *	10.99	ARTHOUSE PRODUCTIONS
147850	U	RETURN OF THE JEDI	10.99	FOX VIDEO
WS147850	U	RETURN OF THE JEDI (WS)	12.99	FOX VIDEO
EVV1166	15	ROBOT JOX	10.99	E.V.SPECIALS
V3413	18	ROLLER BLADE SEVEN	10.99	MISSING IN ACTION
S050262	15	ROLLERBALL	9.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO-EL
0874143	PG	SLIPSTREAM	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
EVS1132	15	SOLAR CRISIS	12.99	ENTERTAINMENT IN VID
ITC8160	U	SPACE 1999 V1-MATTER OF LIF.	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8169	U	SPACE 1999 V10-EARTHBOUND	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8170	U	SPACE 1999 V11-EXILES	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8171	PG	SPACE 1999 V12-ONE MOMENT	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8211	PG	SPACE 1999 V13-MARK OF ARCH.	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8212	PG	SPACE 1999 V14-BRIAN THE BR.	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8213	PG	SPACE 1999 V15-NEW ADAM	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8214	PG	SPACE 1999 V16-THE A-B CHRY.	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8215	PG	SPACE 1999 V17-MATTER OF BA.	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8216	PG	SPACE 1999 V18-LAMBDA FACT..	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8217	PG	SPACE 1999 V19-DORZAK/DEVIL	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8161	PG	SPACE 1999 V2-DRAGON'S DOM.	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8162	PG	SPACE 1999 V3-LAST ENEMY	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8163	PG	SPACE 1999 V4-TROUBLED SPIR.	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8164	PG	SPACE 1999 V5-END/ETERNITY	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8165	PG	SPACE 1999 V6-DEATH'S OTHER	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8166	PG	SPACE 1999 V7-ALPHA CHILD	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8167	PG	SPACE 1999 V8-FORCE OF LIFE	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8168	PG	SPACE 1999 V9-MISSING LINK	10.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
0853463	PG	SPACE 1999-ALIEN ATTACK	10.99	POLYGRAM VIDEO
0853543	PG	SPACE 1999-COSMIC PRINCESS	10.99	POLYGRAM VIDEO
0853443	PG	SPACE 1999-DESTINATION MOON	10.99	POLYGRAM VIDEO
0853423	U	SPACE 1999-JOURNEY THROUGH	10.99	POLYGRAM VIDEO
SBV126	PG	SPACE CHASE	10.99	NEW AGE SPECIALS
113050	U	STAR WARS	10.99	FOX VIDEO
WS113050	U	STAR WARS (WS)	12.99	FOX VIDEO
WTB39270	15	STRANGE INVADERS	6.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO
BBCV4963	PG	SURVIVORS V1-4TH HORSEMAN	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV4964	PG	SURVIVORS V2-GONE AWAY	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV5111	PG	SURVIVORS V3-GONE TO	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV5112	PG	SURVIVORS V4-STARVATION	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV5186	PG	SURVIVORS V5-LAW & ORDER	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE

BBCV5187	PG	SURVIVORS V6-REVENGE	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BDV11162	15	THX 1138 (WS)	15.99	BLUE DOLPHIN - TARTA
S012612	PG	TIME TRAX	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
MSS1089	18	TIME WARS	12.99	MOONSTONE PICTURES /
ITC8118	U	TIMESLIP-DAY OF THE CLONE	16.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8116	U	TIMESLIP-TIME OF ICE BOX	16.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8115	U	TIMESLIP-WRONG END OF TIME	16.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
ITC8117	U	TIMESLIP-YEAR OF BURN UP	16.99	ITC HOME VIDEO (UK)
517550	PG	TIMESTALKERS	17.65	FOXVIDEO LTD.
GLD50952	18	TOTAL RECALL	10.99	GUILD HOME VIDEO
GLD50972	18	TOTAL RECALL + MAKING OF	14.99	GUILD HOME VIDEO
517250	18	TRANSFORMATIONS	17.65	FOXVIDEO LTD.
BBCV5243	PG	TRIPODS VOL.1 (3 EPISODES)	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV5244	U	TRIPODS VOL.2	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV5293	U	TRIPODS VOL.3	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
BBCV5294	U	TRIPODS VOL.4	10.99	BBC VIDEO ENTERPRISE
0862023	15	TROLL	4.99	POLYGRAM DEL.
ULTV1001	PG	ULTRAMAN-ALIEN INVASION PT1	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
EVS1091	15	UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD	10.99	ENTERTAINMENT IN VID
S001489	15	V-1ST SERIES PARTS 1&2	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S115762	15	V-2ND SERIES-EPISODES 1/2/3	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S115766	15	V-2ND SERIES-EPISODES 10/11	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S115767	15	V-2ND SERIES-EPISODES 12/13	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S115768	15	V-2ND SERIES-EPISODES 14/15	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S115769	15	V-2ND SERIES-EPISODES 16/17	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S115760	15	V-2ND SERIES-EPISODES 18/19	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S115763	15	V-2ND SERIES-EPISODES 4/5	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S115764	15	V-2ND SERIES-EPISODES 6/7	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S115765	15	V-2ND SERIES-EPISODES 8/9	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S011489	15	V-FINAL BATTLE PART 1	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S011490	15	V-FINAL BATTLE PART 2	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S011491	15	V-FINAL BATTLE PART 3	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
VHR2018	PG	WAR OF THE WORLDS	10.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
PEV11846	18	WORLD GONE WILD	7.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO SP

WESTERNS

PES51561	PG	ALAMO (DIRECTOR'S CUT) (WS)	12.99	MGM/UA
PES99224	PG	ALAMO *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
PES99481	PG	BIG COUNTRY (WESTERN)*	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
714950	15	BIG JAKE	10.99	FOX VIDEO
122650	U	BROKEN LANCE	10.99	FOX VIDEO
AKT0001	18	BULLET FOR THE GENERAL (WS)	12.99	AKTIV
106150	PG	BUTCH CASSIDY & SUND.KID *	6.99	FOX VIDEO
CVR21106	PG	CACTUS JACK	10.99	COLUMBIA TRISTAR
CC7053	PG	CAT BALLOU	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
S001089	PG	CHISUM	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
S011213	PG	COWBOYS (J.WAYNE)	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
AH1001	18	DJANGO	15.99	SIMITAR ENTERTAINMEN
AKT0002	18	DJANGO STRIKES AGAIN	12.99	AKTIV
PES99447	PG	DODGE CITY *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
PES99277	15	FISTFUL OF DOLLARS *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
PES99276	15	FOR A FEW DOLLARS MORE *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
PES99225	18	GOOD THE BAD & THE UGLY *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
0880183	PG	GUNFIGHT AT THE O.K.CORRAL	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
PES99214	18	HANG 'EM HIGH *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
PES99284	18	HEAVEN'S GATE *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
CC1007	U	HIGH NOON	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
VHR1021	18	HIGH PLAINS DRIFTER	10.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
PES52052	PG	HOW THE WEST WAS WON *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
148550	U	JESSE JAMES	10.99	FOX VIDEO
S013653	15	JOHN WAYNE(3 FILM COLL)(2TP)	14.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
PES99624	PG	KENTUCKIAN *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
PES99268	18	LONG RIDERS *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
S051563	PG	MAGNIFICENT SEVEN (WS)	12.99	MGM/UA
PES99240	PG	MAGNIFICENT SEVEN (WESTERN)*	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
714850	15	MAN CALLED HORSE	12.99	FOX VIDEO
PES99283	15	MISSOURI BREAKS *	7.99	WARNER WESTERN SPECI
139850	U	MY DARLING CLEMENTINE	10.99	FOX VIDEO
6319383	15	NEVADA SMITH	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
6319443	15	ONCE UPON A TIME IN WEST	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
VHR2194	PG	ONE EYED JACKS	10.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
PES61125	18	OUTLAW JOSEY WALES	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
PES11475	15	PALE RIDER	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S001050	PG	RIO BRAVO	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
6319403	U	ROOSTER COGBURN	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
PES12235	U	SEARCHERS (WS)	12.99	MGM/UA
S038186	PG	SHALAKO	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO-LU
VHR2013	PG	SHANE	10.99	CIC VIDEO S/T
CC7129	PG	SILVERADO	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
0842663	18	SOLDIER BLUE	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
S001042	15	TOM HORN	6.99	WARNER-SCREEN CLASSI
EVS1141	15	TOMBSTONE	12.99	ENTERTAINMENT IN VID
0880243	PG	TRUE GRIT	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
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105650	PG	UNDEFEATED	10.99	FOX VIDEO
S012531	15	UNFORGIVEN	12.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
S013131	15	UNFORGIVEN (WS)	13.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
PES1014	18	WILD BUNCH (FEATURE)	10.99	WARNER HOME VIDEO(S/
0880203	U	WINCHESTER 73	6.99	KARUSSELL/POLYGRAM
CC7112	18	YOUNG GUNS	6.99	VIDEO COLL.CINEMA CL
190250	15	YOUNG GUNS 2-BLAZE OF GLORY	7.99	FOX VIDEO

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MANV1019	18	3 X 3 EYES-PART TWO	11.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1061	18	A D POLICE 1:VOOMER MADNESS	6.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1066	18	A D POLICE 2:PARADISE LOOP	6.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
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KIS93009	18	ADVENTURE DUO (EP.1)(DUBBED)	6.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
KIS94009		ADVENTURE KID (EP.1)(SUB)	12.99	KISEKI FILMS
KIS93011		ADVENTURE KID (EP.2)(DUB)	9.99	KISEKI FILMS
KIS93013		ADVENTURE KID (EP.3)(DUB)	9.99	KISEKI FILMS
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IWCV1002	15	AKIRA (COLLECTORS EDITION)	20.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1036	15	AKIRA PRODUCTION REPORT	8.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
KIS93012	15	AMBASSADOR MAGMA (EP.1-3)	9.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
KIS93021		AMBASSADOR MAGMA (EP.10&11)	10.99	KISEKI FILMS
KIS93022		AMBASSADOR MAGMA (EP.12&13)	10.99	KISEKI FILMS
KIS93015	15	AMBASSADOR MAGMA (EP.4&5)	7.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
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KIS93020		AMBASSADOR MAGMA (EP.8&9)	10.99	KISEKI FILMS
MANV1060	15	APPLESEED	11.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1037	15	BATTLE ANGEL ALITA	11.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
KIS93005	15	BLACK MAGIC M-66 (DUBBED)	7.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
KIS94005	15	BLACK MAGIC M-66 (SUBTITLED)	9.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
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AP092-002	PG	BUBBLEGUM CRISIS-EPISODE 2	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
AP092-003	PG	BUBBLEGUM CRISIS-EPISODE 3	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
AP092-004	PG	BUBBLEGUM CRISIS-EPISODE 4	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
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AP092-006	PG	BUBBLEGUM CRISIS-EPISODE 6	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
AP092-007	PG	BUBBLEGUM CRISIS-EPISODE 7	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
AP092-008	PG	BUBBLEGUM CRISIS-EPISODE 8	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
VPD396	PG	CAPTAIN COSMOS	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAINME
PAR50008	PG	CATGIRL:NUKU-NUKU (EP.1/2&3)	12.99	PARADOX FILMS
KIS93016	PG	CLASH OF THE BIONOIDS	9.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
KIS93037		COBRA VOL.1	10.99	KISEKI FILMS
VPD410	PG	COSMOS CONQUEROR	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAINME
MANV1015	18	CRYING FREEMAN 1-PORTRAIT	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1020	18	CRYING FREEMAN 2-ENEMY	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
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MANV1055	15	CYBER CITY OEDO 808-FILE 2	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
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MANV1015	15	DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS 1-DEMON	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1021	15	DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS 2-DISAST.	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1025	15	DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS 3-RISE	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1031	18	DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS 4-FINAL	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
VPD397	PG	FALCON 7	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAINME
MANV1028	15	FIRE TRIPPER	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1001	18	FIST OF THE NORTH STAR	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
WEST011	18	GALACTIC PIRATES-PART 1	10.99	WESTERN CONNECTION
WEST012	18	GALACTIC PIRATES-PART 2	10.99	WESTERN CONNECTION
WEST013	18	GALACTIC PIRATES-PART 3	10.99	WESTERN CONNECTION
AP094-006	PG	GENESIS SURVIVER GAIARTH 1	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
AP094-007	PG	GENESIS SURVIVER GAIARTH 2	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
AP094-008	PG	GENESIS SURVIVER GAIARTH 3	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
MANV1062	18	GENO CYBER-STAGE 1:A NEW L..	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1067	18	GENO CYBER-STAGE 2:VAJRANOID	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV9998	18	GENO CYBER-STAGE 3:GLOBAL W.	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
KIS93008	18	GIGOLO	6.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
MANV1027	18	GOLGO 13-THE PROFESSIONAL	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
WEST019	15	GREY	12.99	WESTERN CONNECTION
KIS95002		GUNBUSTER (BOX SET)	19.99	KISEKI FILMS
KIS94006	PG	GUNBUSTER (EPISODES 1&2)	7.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
KIS94014	PG	GUNBUSTER (EPISODES 3&4)	7.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
KIS94023	PG	GUNBUSTER (EPISODES 5&6)	7.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
MANIA1001	18	GUY-AWAKENING OF THE DEVIL	12.99	ANIMANIA
MANV1053	PG	GUYVER-DATA 10:HAUNTED VILL.	5.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1026	15	GUYVER-DATA 1:GENESIS OF	5.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1029	15	GUYVER-DATA 2:BATTLE OF	5.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1032	PG	GUYVER-DATA 3:MYSTERIOUS SH.	5.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1035	PG	GUYVER-DATA 4:ATTACK OF HYP.	5.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1038	15	GUYVER-DATA 5:DEATH OF THE	5.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
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MANV1047	15	GUYVER-DATA 8:LOST UNIT	5.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1050	15	GUYVER-DATA 9:TRANSFORMATIO.	5.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1013	PG	HEROIC LEGEND/ARISLAN 1 (WS)	11.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1022	PG	HEROIC LEGEND/ARISLAN 2 (WS)	11.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
AP093-002	PG	HURRICANE LIVE 2032	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
AP093-003	15	HURRICANE LIVE 2033	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
MANV1017	15	JUDGE	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
WEST010	18	KAMASUTRA	10.99	WESTERN CONNECTION
PAR50010	PG	KO CENTURY BEAST WARR.1-3	12.99	PARADOX FILMS
MANV1033	15	LAUGHING TARGET	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1012	PG	LENSMAN	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
WEST027	PG	LUPIN 3-THE FUMA CONSPIRACY	12.99	WESTERN CONNECTION
KIS95001		MACROSS II (BOX SET)	29.99	KISEKI FILMS
KIS93001	15	MACROSS II-EPISODES 1&2	7.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
KIS93002	15	MACROSS II-EPISODES 3&4	7.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
KIS93003	15	MACROSS II-EPISODES 5&6	7.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
MANV1040	PG	MARIS THE WONDERGIRL	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
KIS93035		MEGAZONE 1	8.99	KISEKI FILMS
MANV1045	18	MERMAID FOREST	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
PIO10003	PG	MOLDIVER V1-METAMORFORCE	12.99	PIONEER
PIO10004	PG	MOLDIVER V2-LONGING/DESTR..	12.99	PIONEER
MANV1046	18	MONSTER CITY	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1005	PG	ODIN	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
AP093-004	15	OTAKU NO VIDEO	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
MANV1002	15	PROJECT A-KO	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1014	PG	RG VEDA	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
AP094-003	18	RIDING BEAN (DUBBED)	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
AP093-001	18	RIDING BEAN (SUBTITLED)	19.99	ANIME PROJECTS
KIS93024	15	ROBOTECH V1-BOOBYTRAP	12.99	KISEKI FILMS
KIS93025	U	ROBOTECH VOL.2	12.99	KISEKI FILMS
MANV1051	15	ROUJIN-Z	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
WEST026	PG	SALAMANDER PT.1	10.99	WESTERN CONNECTION
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KIS93027	U	STAR BLAZERS PART 1	12.99	KISEKI FILMS
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KIS93030	U	STAR BLAZERS PART 4	12.99	KISEKI FILMS
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PIO10002	PG	TENCHI MUYO V2-HELLO RYO-OH.	12.99	PIONEER
VPD390	PG	THUNDER PRINCE	10.99	IMPERIAL ENTERTAINME
MANV1048	15	TOKYO BABYLON (PART 1)	10.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1054	15	TOKYO BABYLON (PART 2)	10.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
KIS93041		TRANSVESTITE	9.99	KISEKI FILMS
MANV1018	15	ULTIMATE TEACHER	9.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1008	18	UROTSUKIDOJI 1-LEGEND/OVERF.	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
MANV1009	18	UROTSUKIDOJI 2-LEGEND/DEMON	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
KIS95003	18	UROTSUKIDOJI 3(BOX SET)(DUB)	29.99	KISEKI FILMS
KIS95000	18	UROTSUKIDOJI 3(BOX SET)(SUB)	19.99	KISEKI FILMS
KIS93007	18	UROTSUKIDOJI 3-(EP.1)(DUB)	6.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
KIS94007	18	UROTSUKIDOJI 3-(EP.1)(SUB)	9.99	KISEKI FILMS 21/11-3
AP094-001	PG	URUSEI YATSURA 1-ONLY YOU	12.99	ANIME PROJECTS
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WEST025	PG	USHIO & TORA 1 2 3	12.99	WESTERN CONNECTION
MANV1011	15	VAMPIRE HUNTER D	13.99	MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
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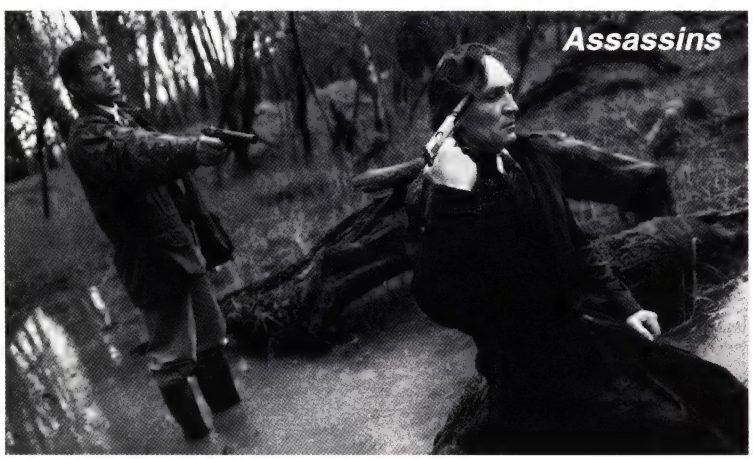
Satellite Scene

John Mosby previews the May and June highlights on Satellite

As May draws to a close, the various SKY movie channels will be providing a tie-in with the (delayed) release of *Space Truckers* (which we at *Impact* featured a few issues ago) with their own 'Space Week'. Movies such as *Alien*, *Spaceballs*, *Star Trek: Generations*, *Apollo 13* and *Barbarella* will feature as part of the mini-season between May 26th - June 1st.

On SKY, *Millennium* goes straight into repeats of the first series and repeats of *Highlander's* third season continue. The fifth series of *Deep Space Nine*, which started mid-May continues with brand new episodes and proves it is now the strongest part of the Trek TV franchise. *Sliders* sees a shake-up to its regular line-up with the departure of John Rhys-Davies (Arturo) and a new Slider joining the team. She will be more militaristic in style and add a new dimension (?) to the show's formula.

As for the movie debuts on satellite, *Assassins* debuts on SKY in June. The film received some mixed box-office on its cinematic release, but the Sly Stallone / Antonio Banderas vehicle works pretty well. The two play rival hit-men, the former wants out, the latter wants in, and in the old tradition of Highlander, there can be only one! What could have been a very formulaic plot is enlivened by the casting of its leads and a neat plot twist.



Martin Scorsese's *Casino* also gets its satellite debut in June. On a par with *Goodfellas*, this is a violent, epic drama with regulars Robert De Niro and Joe Pesci being joined by Sharon Stone in a story of the sinister side of Las Vegas. Its running time (around the three hour mark) makes it hard going at some points, but the intensity of the proceedings will leave you breathless. Pesci is brilliant as a viciously loose cannon about to bring down the intricate house of cards and Stone received plaudits for a role that allows her to keep most of her clothes on!



Murder In The First is a prison drama that is equally intense. Harder-hitting than, say, *The Shawshank Redemption*, this is more intimate in scale, yet still very powerful. Christian Slater is drafted in to defend Kevin Bacon's inmate, a man who has just committed cold-blooded murder (with a spoon no less!). What seems an open and shut case is knocked off its hinges by the sadistic treatment Bacon had received at the hands of warden Gary Oldman. Slowly, piece by piece, we learn the full extent of the abuse and the reasons behind the attack.

There are several new series starting on SKY during June, the main two as part of the Super Sunday package. Corbin Bernsen takes the lead in *The Cape*, an everyday story of NASA folk at the famous John F Kennedy Space Centre. This is a series that divides its time between the technical and personal problems that Bernsen and his astronauts-in-training encounter on a day to day basis. It's made with the co-operation of NASA and rides the renewed interest in the space race, an all things heavenly. It's a little bit better than the Melrose Space idea and though its future Stateside is unsure, it may prove a ratings winner over here when it begins on Sunday 1st June, replacing the Man of Steel.

The Pretender is also another show that has done well in the States. Michael T Weiss stars as Jarod Russell a man who has been bred and experimented on to become a human chameleon, able to assume any identity and use his incredible IQ to right wrongs. He'll also be trying to find out the real truth about his parents and avoiding those who would seek to imprison him again. It has proven one of the few rating-winners in the recent US line-up and should be around for some time. It begins at 7:00pm on Sunday 22nd June.

SKY 2

UK GOLD
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SCI-FI CHANNEL

TNT
Classic Movies

MANGA MANIA

Sangit Singh looks at the latest Anime video releases.



BLUE SONNET

Blue Sonnet tells the story of a young girl, Sonnet Bagi, who is rescued from the slums of America and transformed into a combat cyborg by the Taron Organisation and specifically, the sinister Dr. Melekes. Cybernetic implants have increased her strength and speed and multiplied her latent psychic powers to devastating heights.

There are five separate episodes altogether, released on two videos. The first contains Missions 1 and 2 and the second has Missions 3, 4 and 5. As I don't want to give away too much of the story, I will just give an overview of all five episodes.

Missions 1 and 2 show us what Sonnet is capable of at Taron's training grounds. She is then sent to Tokyo to find and monitor Ran Komatsuzaki. Ran is a young girl whose psychic abilities are starting to emerge. These abilities have drawn her to the attention of Dr. Melekes, who thinks she is something more than any normal psychic. Sonnet is determined to succeed in her mission as she is told that the previous cyborg sent to monitor Ran - codenamed RX 606 - mysteriously disappeared.

As Ran and Sonnet continue normal seeming lives at school, Ran's powers start to increase, but Sonnet, exposed for the first time to a normal emotional environment, starts to doubt her creator's methods for getting what he wants.



Missions 3, 4 and 5 continue with Dr. Melekes and Sonnet pursuing Ran for the secret of the psychic powers known as Red Fang, that of course run through Ran's blood. Ran now seems to have very little control over her rapidly increasing powers. Salvation seems to beckon in the shape of an ESP laboratory, but even this has been infiltrated by the evil of Taron. They come for Ran, intent on possessing her and her powers with no regard for anyone who gets in their way. The final battle between Ran's Red Fang and Blue Sonnet is inevitable, but will Ran be able to control her power before it destroys her and all she cares for?

Well worth watching. Both videos have plenty of action and keep the viewer guessing as what is going to happen next and who's who and which side they are on.

SHADOW SKILL

Ella and Gau set off on their annual journey to visit the graves of Gau's parents. Although she is not his real big sister, Ella has adopted Gau, and has initiated him into the fighting school of which she is a member. The school teaches an ancient form of combat, part of which is the Shadow Skill. Now on this journey, she tries to teach him the basic concepts behind using and mastering the Shadow Skill, but it is a concept that he seems unable or unwilling to grasp. As they continue on their journey, strange bandits, intent on killing them stalk them. Together they face this and other challenges, as Ella tries to prepare Gau for an upcoming tournament, which he is determined to win. But to stand any chance, he must first beat Ella.



This video seems to be aimed squarely at the fight enthusiast. The story only occasionally provides any type of background information. All the action revolves around the fight sequences. If this is what you like then you will probably enjoy this, but if you like something a bit deeper, then this is one to avoid.

ESCAPE FROM L.A.

While the argument rages about whether George Lucas should have 'up-dated' parts of *Star Wars*, equally veteran director John Carpenter had no such qualms when he completely remade the cult hit *Escape From New York*. Oh, sure, the location has changed to Los Angeles, but make no mistake - everything else is pretty much the same only with the added attraction of Nineties technology.

However this is a film that proves that there has to be more to films than the CGI effects. The canvas may be bigger this



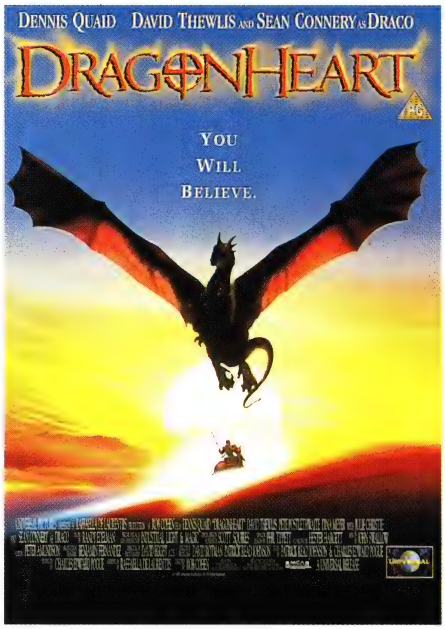
time around, but this L.A. version has little of the charm that won the audiences the first time. Kurt Russell is back as the eye-patched Snake Plissken, a renegade in a society gone mad on the idea of political correctness. You remember that back in the early eighties (or 1997 in the film) Plissken is sent to rescue the President who has crash-landed in the centre of New York, now a walled prison. To ensure his co-operation, Snake is injected with a lethal toxin that will kill him if he doesn't get the antidote in time. This time around...well, let's see. Snake is given the task of rescuing the new President's wayward daughter (who has stolen a device capable of wiping out worldwide communication) from the annexed L.A. To ensure his co-operation he is injected with.....you get the idea.

The film is something of a disappointment to fans of the original. Even Carpenter admits that it is more of a remake, but there seems little point in modernising a film that is only a decade or so old. If Snake was such a great character why not give him something new to do and some other incentive? This is, simply, Russell and Carpenter treading water and cashing in on the original. With the exception of a few nice in-jokes, the plot is tired and meandering. As a stand alone piece it is an acceptable action movie with a varied selection of co-stars (including Steve Buscemi, Peter Fonda, Stacy Keach and Cliff Robertson). As a sequel/remake it's something of a disappointment and a waste of a good opportunity.

DRAGON HEART

Now here's a good old romp full of knights, dragons, goodies, baddies all wrapped up with some state-of-the-art special effects. It received a mixed reception on its cinematic release, but personally I found this tale of medieval skullduggery perfectly watchable and suitable for all the family.

Dennis Quaid is Bowen a knight who has made it his mission to kill all dragons. Sean Connery voices the character of Draco, last of the dragons with whom Bowen must form an uneasy alliance when a shared event from their past brings them together. The knight and the dragon manage to pull off some comical scams by conning various villagers into parting with money so that Bowen can 'protect' them and 'kill' the dragon threatening their homestead. However this 'sting'



is only one thread to the tale. There is an underlying story of redemption, sacrifice and loyalty which works on a very strong level.

The effects which animate Draco (solely a computer-creation) are superb and were actually modelled on the actions and facial expressions of Connery. The voice is perfectly matched (though different actors voice the character in different languages) and Draco is as believable as any of the actors sharing the screen. *Dragonheart* actually shows how the technology that we marvelled at during *Jurassic Park* has moved forward.

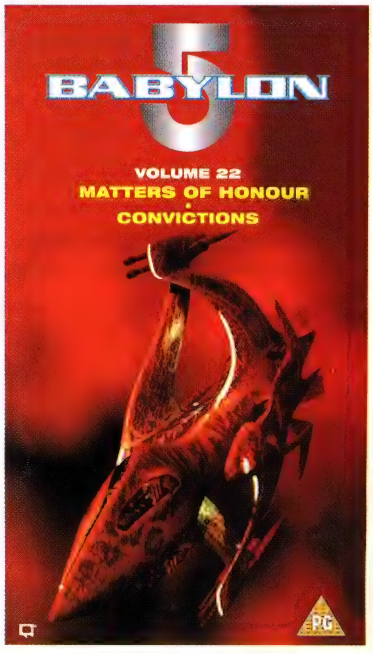
It's full of action, but suitable for all ages and great fun. It also wins the award for best bit of dialogue in a movie for '96 with "...please get your buttocks off my tongue!"

BABYLON 5

This is the series rapidly giving the Star Trek franchise a run for its money. A clever combination of sf action, poliсtical intrigue, humour, drama and epic storylines, the saga of the space-station with an important destiny to fulfil enters its third series of video releases to co-incide with the proposed broardcast of the fourth season on Channel 4.

The secret of this show's continuing success story is the way that it doesn't resolve every problem with each episode. Where the likes of Deep Space nine provide perfectly good self-contained episodes, *Babylon 5* has more strands than your average jumper - thus allowing a casual viewer to enjoy a single episode, but give the regular watcher a sense of history in the making.

The first two episodes of Season 3 are contained on Volume 22 of the Beyond Vision line from Warner home Video/MGM UZA. The season opener (*Matters Of Honour*) opens with the Instellar War, threatened for two series, finally becoming a reality. The stage is set for any of the more important and powerful plot-lines that echo through future episodes. The second episode is Convictions in which the spac-station is hit by a psychopathic bomber. There are some superb moments including a cleverly



played-out encounter between best-of-enemies Londo and G'Kar which sees them trapped together in a lift with the air running out.

Superbly written with top-notch CGI effects, it's not hard to see why this show is rapidly becoming must-see TV!

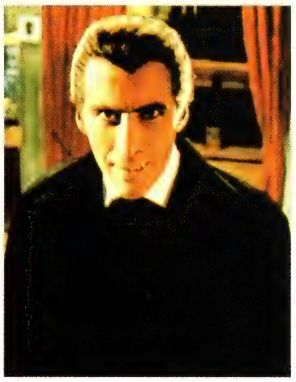
40TH ANNIVERSARY OF HAMMER

Tony Earnshaw looks at the 40th anniversary video release of a trio of Hammer horror classics - *The Curse Of Frankenstein, Dracula* and *The Mummy.*

Good movies never die and, unlike the old soldiers in the song, they don't even fade away - at least as long as devoted fans demand their continual re-release.

Perhaps the most popular film studio in the world was Hammer Films, which churned out a string of atmospheric chillers until its demise in the late seventies.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of Hammer's first monster smash - the garish, full-colour *The Curse Of Frankenstein*, which started a snowball rolling which gathered momentum over more than 20 years, producing hit after hit after hit.



Many of Hammer's greatest movies are now available on video, among them *Dracula - Prince Of Drakness*, *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed*, *She* and *Quatermass And The Pit.*

But of the original classics, both *The Curse Of Frankenstein* and *Dracula* have been unavailable. Until now.

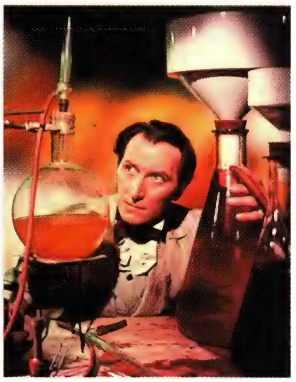
There is something timeless about Hammer's films, and with *Curse*, *Dracula* and *The Mummy* (which is also released for the second time), film buffs will be able to see for themselves just what could be achieved with fine acting, assured direction, opulent sets and an almost obligatory low budget.



The Curse Of Frankenstein set the tone for all Hammer's horror films after 1957. Lushly photographed in a Mittel-European setting and boasting a star-making performance from Peter Cushing, then the nation's biggest TV star, it was a perfect lurid Grand Guignol shocker.

Featuring brains in bell jars, rotting corpses and Christopher Lee's creature looking like something which had just staggered away from a particularly gruesome car accident, *The Curse Of Frankenstein* was and is reminiscent of a macabre horror comic. What's more, it stands up remarkably well.

Dracula is Hammer's *piece de resistance*. It pitted Lee's elegant, sexually attractive and utterly deadly vampire king against Cushing's logical, heroic and athletic Van Helsing, and has never been equalled in terms of action, atmosphere or style by any of its cinematic descendants.



Stunningly photographed in garish reds and similar hues, it streams with the symbolic blood of Count Dracula who dominates the film despite playing a secondly part to Cushing's dashing vampire hunter.

The pulse-racing soundtrack by James Bernard also piles on the tension (who can forget his opening theme - the strident notes play out the word Dra-cu-la as blood drips onto the vampire's coffin lid?), most notably in the memorable finale as Van Helsing confronts Dracula in his castle. Four decades on it remains as thrilling as ever.

Finally, there is *The Mummy*. This is one hell of a good-looking film, and the third in Hammer's original trio of fright flicks. Again, it features Cushing and Lee, the former as an Egyptian archeologist who defiles the tomb of a long-dead princess, the latter as the mute mummy who wreaks havoc in revenge.

In terms of storyline, *The Mummy* is the weakest, but the film comes vividly to life through the inspired playing of Lee as the haunted mummy Kharis. He plays the majority of his scenes with his eyes - windows to a tomented soul which burns with love for his beloved princess (Yvonne Furneaux) and hatred for the men who interrupted her sleep of centuries.

Once again Cushing and Lee are perfectly matched, and the film, directed by Hammer maestro Terence Fisher, the man behind *Curse* and *Dracula*, meets the same level of genius as its predecessors. If your idea of a horror movie are the stalk 'n' slash gorefests of John Carpenter or Tobe Hooper, then maybe you think Hammer's horrors are tame or boring.

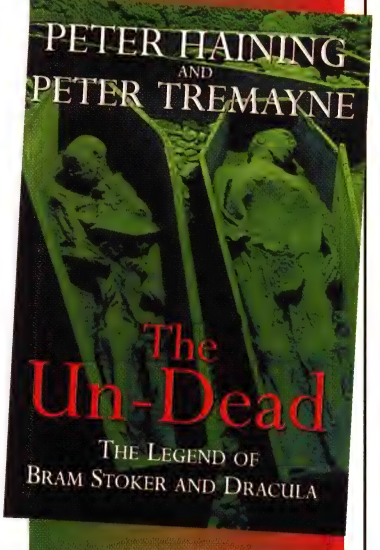
Don't be fooled. Everything that came after Hammer - from *Night Of The Living Dead* to *The Exorcist* to *Halloween* and *Friday The 13th* - arrived because Hammer paved the way.

Think about it.

To help celebrate 40 years of Hammer Horror, there's a special competition run with Warner Bros/Peter Noble PR/Constable books. There are five sets of Hammer Videos (*The Curse of Frankenstein, Dracula, The Mummy*) to be won - normally retailing at £10.99 each. Just for that little bit extra,



there's also the chance to win *The Un-dead, The Legend of Bram Stoker* and *Dracula* (£16.99) released by Constable Books on June 9th.



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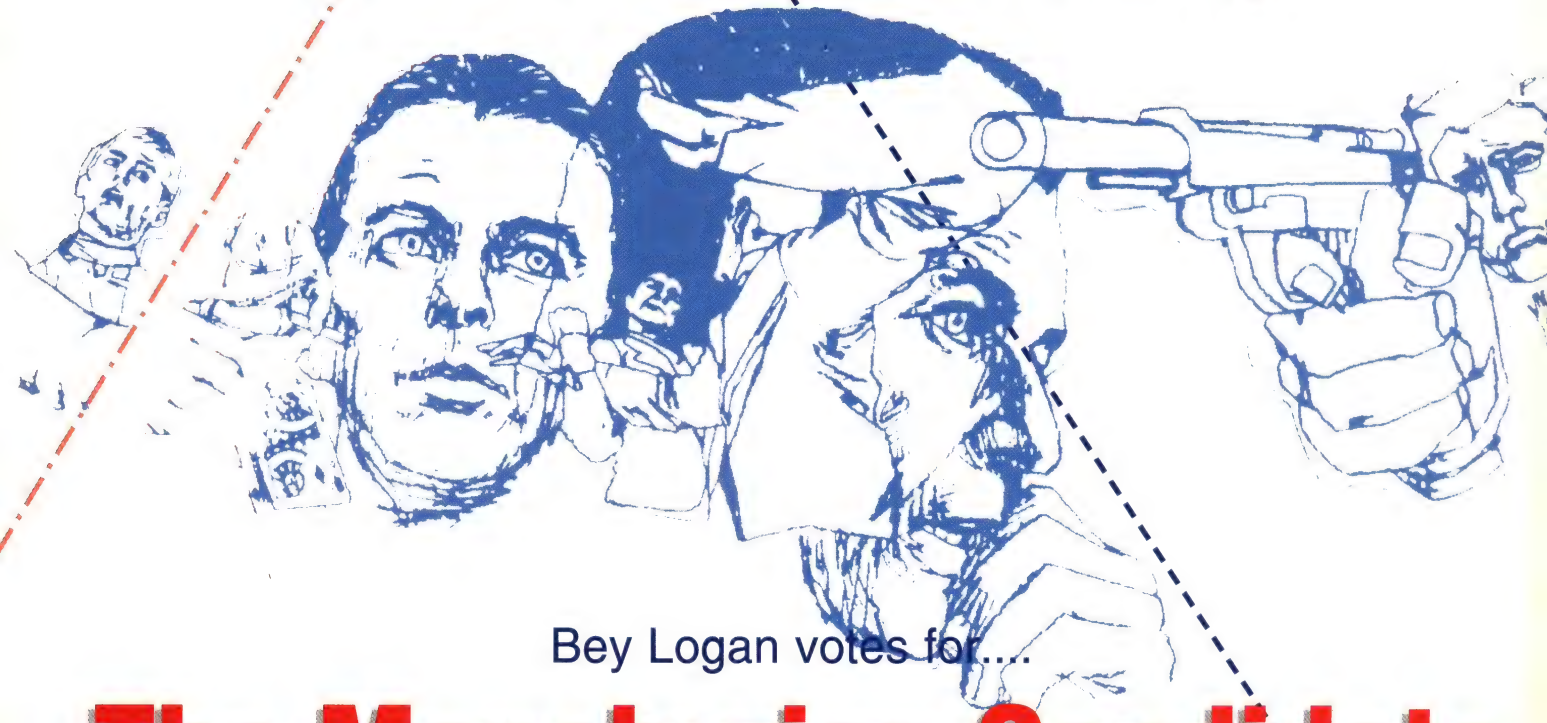
Which regular Hammer Horror star played Grand Moff Tarkin in *Star Wars*?

Answers on the back of a sealed down envelope addressed to: *Impact*, Revenue Chambers, St. Peter's Street, Huddersfield HD1 1DL.

lazer blasts

BLACK AND WHITE ASSASSINATION BLUES

Sinatra does it his way



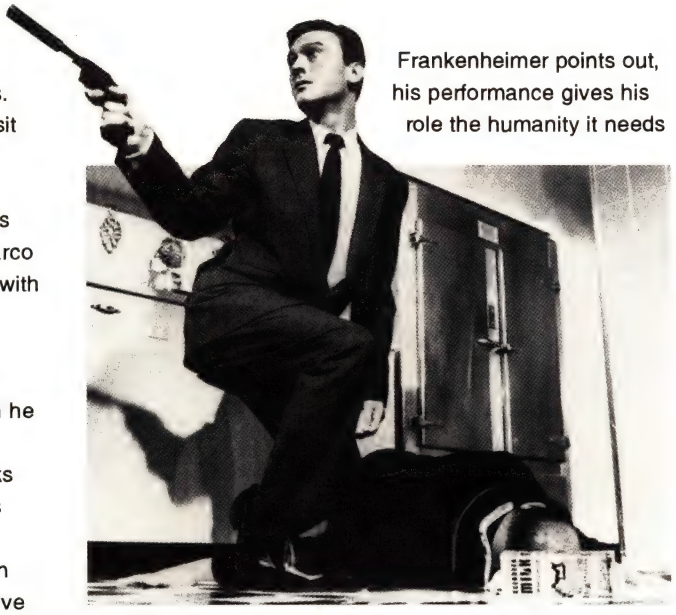
Bey Logan votes for....

The Manchurian Candidate

At a press conference to promote his film *Above The Law* (a.k.a. *Nico*), Steven Seagal insisted that this was not a martial arts movie, but instead a political thriller which featured sequences depicting unarmed combat. Did the fact that *Bad Day At Black Rock* and *The Manchurian Candidate* featured stylished fight scenes make them martial arts movies?, he asked. At the time, I'd seen the Spencer Tracy classic, but not the latter film. Intrigued, I read up on it, and discovered that the film actually featured the first bona fide karate fight in an American movie. The duel is between Frank Sinatra and Henry Silva (who was also, incidentally, in *Above The Law*). For that reason, if no other, I wanted to see the film itself, and found out that, due to a dispute between United Artists and Sinatra, it had been withdrawn from release for twenty-five years. During that period it gained a legendary status as a lost classic. The film is now available as a MGM/UA Collector's Edition laser disc, which features the full film, with commentary by director John Frankenheimer, interveiw with Frankenheimer, screenwriter George Axelrod and Sinatra and the usual round-up of stills and publicity material. Curiously, no mention is made of the film's long absence from the screen. If ever there was a movie that deserved to be rediscovered, it's this one. The term 'classic' is bandied around very loosely these days, but, in all departments, *The Manchurian Candidate* fits the bill.



The story begins during the Korean War. An American army unit, including the gruffy amiable Bennett Marco (Frank Sinatra) and the prissy martinet Raymond Shaw (Laurance Harvey) are captured by Russian troops and taken to a communist base in Manchuria. There Shaw is brainwashed and turned into a human weapon, a perfect, souless assassin activated by the turn of a solitaire card. The unit is released, having been given false memories of their being rescued by Shaw, who is awarded the Congressional Medal Of Honour for his valour. Back in America, Shaw is reunited with his domineering mother (Angela Lansbury) and her drunken bigot of a U.S. Senator husband (James Gregory). Marco begins experiencing vivid recurring nightmares of his captivity in Manchuria,



and is shifted to less demanding assignments. Finally, he decides to visit Shaw to ask if he has experienced similar phenomenon. At Shaw's New York apartment Marco has a voilent encounter with Shaw's valet, Chunjin (Henry Silva), who is actually a soviet agent. After a test run, in which he murders his employer, Shaw's real agenda kicks in, as his mother, who is actually his controller, directs him to perform an assassination that will give her the political power she craves. Along the way, Shaw is forced to destroy his only real chance for happiness, killing Iselin's political rival, Senator Thomas Jordan (John McGiver) and his daughter, Jocie (Leslie Parrish), who Shaw is in love with. Shaw's primary assigment is known only to his mother. Marco uncovers the plot, and does his best to deprogramme Shaw before he can carry out his mission.

The Manchurian Candidate is shot in luminous black-and-white. It's actually one of those rare films that you can't imagine being in colour. There's something about its stark contrasts, and that use of depth of focus lenses, that is essential to its identity. The analog track on the laser disc features a running commentary by Frankenheimer. These are always a challenge for a director, as they run the risk of devolving into a look how clever I am monologue. In Frankeimer's case, he avoids this by constantly giving credit to the source materials (Richard Condon's book and Axelrod's script) and the performances. There's much to commend with the players all perfectly cast and at the top of their game. Sinatra is a revelation as the rational, frightened Marco, while it's hard to believe that Angela Lansbury's monstrous matriarch could be played by the same bland star of *Murder She Wrote*. (Harder still to believe that Sinatra originally wanted Lucille Ball for the part!) It's a testament to the acting of both parties that the mother/son relationship between Lansbury and Harvey is completely convincing despite the fact that, at the time the film was made, she was only two years older than him!

Harvey, who died in 1973, is magnificent giving the performance of a lifetime as the tortured Raymond Shaw. As Frankenheimer points out, his performance gives his role the humanity it needs in order for the rest of the film to work. Harvey was born Lauruska Mischa Skikne, of a Jewish family that emigrated to South Africa. He had actually seen military service, running away from home, under age, to join the South African navy, and, after moving to England, joining the British army. He died of cancer at the age of 48.

Sinatra's love interest is supplied by Janet *Psycho* Leigh, a stranger he meets on a train. Their initial courtship sequences are totally off-the-wall. Critic Roger Ebert suggested that this indicates that Marco is himself a sleeper agent, activated by Leigh to ensure that Shaw accomplishes his mission. This is right up there with the Deckard-is-a-replicant *Blade Runner* controversy, but the issue is not raised anywhere on the collector's edition.

With disarming honesty, Frankenheimer descibes how one moment of genius came to be. Sinatra's reputation for being difficult extends to allegations that he would only perform one take of any scene in any movie he was in. Frankenheimer claims that Sinatra was actually always better on the first take than any subsequent ones, and this was proved during the sequence in which Marco attempts to deprogramme Shaw. To his horror the director found that Sinatra's close up work was out of focus. However, in subsequent re-shoots, Sinatra could not match his original peformance. In the end, Franhenheimer used the out of focus shot, and received plaudits for his decision to shoot Sinatra from the p.o.v of the deranged Raymond Shaw.

The karate fight between Sinatra and Henry Silva is memorable for its viciousness rather than its technique. It introduces the classic element of the 1960s movie martial arts fight, the bare hand chopping through wood, though it can be defined as a karate fight only because the protagonists hold their hands in stylised poses between blows. The end of the sequence, in which Marco wrenches Chunjin's arm repeatedly while questioning him, is certainly reminiscent of a Seagal movie fight.

Incidentally, Silva, who is actually of Puerto Rican extraction, did a fine job of mastering Chunjin's Korean accent.

The film itself is followed by a three way rap session between Frankenheimer, Axelrod and Sinatra. Given that Sinatra's last coherent public statement was made about five years ago, it's nice to hear him talk lucidly about the happy time he had making *The Manchurian Candidate* and how much he appreciated the talent of his collaborators. You really want Frankenhiemer to turn to him and say "So Frank, if you liked it so much, how come you didn't allow anyone else to see it for twenty-five years?"

Sadly, this never happens, leading one to suspect that gag orders were in place.

Following the interview, an extensive array of production stills are presented and it's fascinating to see the way the trailer and publicity materials have dated in a way that film itself has not.

In many respects, the satrical elements of *The Manchurian Candidate* have become more biting after developments in American politics in the post-JFK era. The film was actually shot while Kennedy was alive, making its use of a brainwashed 'patsy', who dies after performing his assassination, eerily prescient.

The truly remarkable thing about *The Manchurian Candidate* is how fresh it seems, as though it was shot yesterday. If it had been made then, it would have been a much more expensive movie, but not a better one. As the finest American thriller of the 60's, *The Manchurian Candidate* gets my vote.



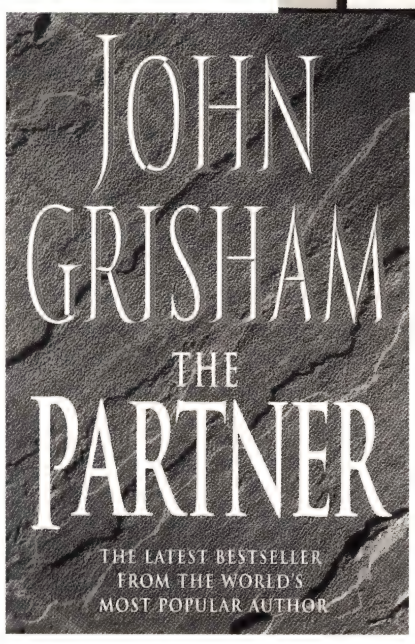
BROUGHT to Book

THE PARTNER

Century Books (RRP: £16.99 Hardback)

There can be no doubt that the likes of John Grisham and Michael Crichton are the most successful authors in terms of getting their books translated into big-budget movies. But reading the latest novel from Mr Grisham and there's a distinct feeling that he's been working on auto-pilot. *The Partner* works on an interesting idea. A crooked lawyer, Patrick Lanigan steals $90 million several weeks after his supposed death in a car-wreck. Four years later he's tracked down in Brazil and after some rather nasty torture is flown back to the USA and the waiting arms of the FBI. But where is the money? Whose was the body in the car?

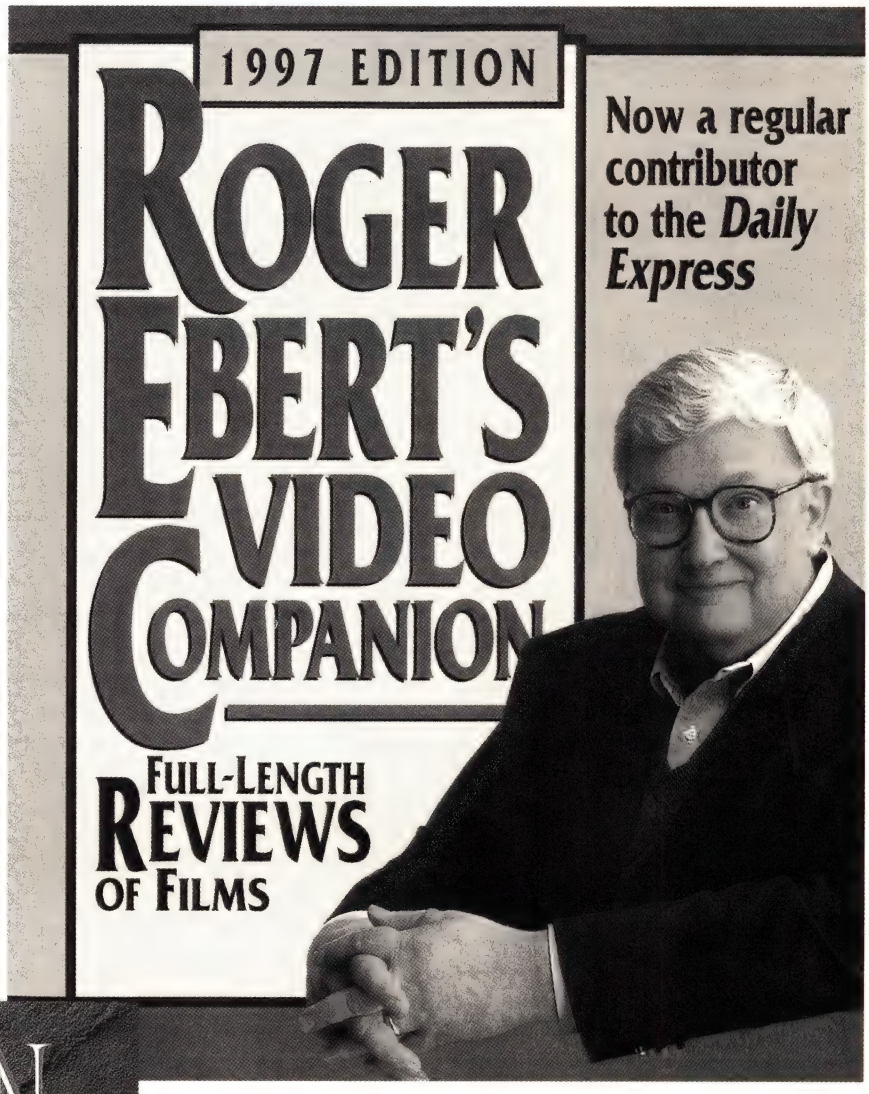
However, Lanigan is not that likeable an anti-hero. He comes across as a manipulative character who seems destined to get out of every corner he's forced into. The original money stolen may have come from a suspect source, but using this to take some of the blame off Lanigan's shoulders seems a bit of a cop-out. The novel lacks the scope of previous Grisham novels and is a world away from *A Time to Kill* (his first novel and best to date). Recent books from Grisham have varied in quality. *The Runaway Jury* was an enjoyable read about the way a jury is manipulated from within, however the motives seemed more emotionally (if not morally) correct than this latest investigation of the way the legal system works. With the current legal ramifications facing the US tobacco industry in real life, it was also topical. *The Rainmaker* (currently being adapted with the likes of Danny deVito and Claire Danes taking roles) is, frankly, all over the place having at least one redundant plot-line that could have been removed with no damage to the main story. In short, Grisham seems to be getting lazy.



The publicity on the cover claims that he's the world's most popular author. If he is seeking to keep that title, he'll have to pull something much better out of his hat for his next masterwork.

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The problem with reviewing any film guide is evaluating why you should buy one, if any, above another. By their very nature they are all very similar and most people (us journalists aside!) can manage with just the one.

Roger Ebert is one half of America's most famous film critic duo (the other 50% being Gene Siskel). He's also the only person to have won the Pulitzer Prize for criticism. In this volume he casts his personal eye over 1,000 movies ranging from *Fargo* to *Trainspotting* to *Independence Day*. Each review is lengthy with explanations of its strong and weaker points and the obligatory cast-list and credits.

Added to this are several short interviews with the likes of Nicolas Cage and Martin Scorsese, Ebert's personal top ten favourite films of the last year and an In Memoriam section for several veteran professionals who have passed on. It's a confidently thick book at a reasonable price of under £13 and represents good value for money. I've seen several film guides with more entries, but this is as good as most and cheaper than many. If you are going to buy such a volume, then you could do much worse than this one.

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BRUCE LEE: THE IMMORTAL DRAGON

New docu uncovers further pearls of the Legend

Cynics could be forgiven for believing that the material to form a decent Little Dragon documentary must be all but gone. The man himself passed away almost 25 years ago, and after *Bruce Lee, The Man And The Legend*, *Bruce Lee The Legend*, *Death By Misadventure*, *Curse Of The Dragon*, *Bruce Lee: Martial Arts Master* and *Bruce Lee: Mandarin Master*, what could be left unseen? In fact, *Bruce Lee: The Immortal Dragon* is not entirely a 'new' docu, being based on a well-received edition of the cable show *A&E Biography*. However, it has been totally repackaged and edited by 20th Century Fox, and there is, happily, material on it that even the most die-hard fan might have missed.



Bruce takes flight at the end of Fist Of Fury.



The Dragon on location in Thailand for the Big Boss.

Where the original A&E show featured the ever-earnest Peter *Mission:Impossible* Graves, the unofficial 'host' of the revised version is the prolific, indefatigable Lee biographer John Little (who, it turns out, looks like a handsomer version of Bruce Willis). Though not the narrator per se, Little, who is working on a multi-volume series of Little Dragon books, provides in-depth details on Lee's life that connects the interviews and film clips. First-time, first-hand reminiscences about Bruce include observations from director Blake *Pink Panther* Edwards, *Enter The Dragon* star John Saxon and Lee's daughter, Shannon, while Kareem Abdul Jabbar and Van Williams, interviewed on earlier docus, offer fresh insights. The most noticable returnee from the A&E version is Linda Lee, who also provided the production with unprecedented access to the Lee family home movie archives. In terms of unseen footage, it's in the realm of Lee's American TV work that the docu really shines. The single most remarkable clip is a *Green Hornet* screentest. In it, Lee's Kato is accompanied by another *Green Hornet* (not Van Williams), and the pair wear different masks from those used in the series itself. The scene shot is very similar to one filmed for the opening episode of the actual *Green Hornet* show. There follows a series of outakes from the series, with a member of the crew holding the clapperboard in front of the camera before Lee and/or Van Williams hit their marks. An added bonus is the 'other' *Batman* appearance, in which The Hornet and Kato lean out of a window as The Dynamic Duo scale a wall. We also see clips from the oft-used *Number One Son* screentest (sometimes referred to as *The Green Hornet* screen test), though the footage, as shown here, is far clearer than the version used on earlier docus, missing from *The Immortal Dragon* (presumably for copyright reasons) is the black-and-white *Green Hornet* press conference shown in the A&E version.



Lee decimates the dojo in Fist.

A dramatic clip from another Lee TV rarity, *Here Come The Brides*, is shown. This was the only Lee TV show in which he didn't get to show off his martial arts skills. Strangely, the superb Ironside fight is not included, and the lost episode of *Blondie* remains just that. It would have been nice to see a collection of all Lee's American screen work, including the great office-wrecking scene with James Garner in *Marlowe* and the choreography Bruce did for *A Walk In The Spring Rain*.

If the documentary falls short, it's in its depiction of Lee's Hong Kong years. The producers never visited the territory and no-one is interviewed in any language other than English. Though there are numerous clips from Lee's Golden Harvest productions, there is nothing in the way of unseen footage. Due to the general reluctance of Warner Brothers to license clips from any of their productions, there's no footage from *Enter The Dragon*, but, instead, scenes from the famous behind-the-scenes 16mm documentary.

Bruce Lee: The Immortal Dragon has no blinding new revelations to present, but the fact that a major American network saw fit to make it at all indicates the enduring appeal of its subject. It has absolutely superb production values, especially when compared to something like *Death By Misadventure*, and should appeal to a wider audience than most Lee docus.

China Beat

NEWS AND REVIEWS

Our monthly update on what's hot and what's not on the Hong Kong action movie scene

NEWS UPDATE

The mighty Shaw Brothers studio is looking for a buyer for its 800 film library, which includes dozens of classic kung fu and swordplay films. The front runner in the bidding for this treasure trove of eastern cinema is Sony, which plans to start an Asian cable TV network....

Despite his impressive acting role in *Hero* (see main review), Yuen Biao has been forced to return to cheap Filipino actioners. His last such project was the abysmal *Tough Beauty* and the *Sloppy Slop*, his latest is *The Hunted Hunter*...

Recent rumours had Jackie Chan dying while on location in South Africa for *Whoam!?*. However, British martial arts actor Mike Lambert, who just flew to join him there, reports that Chan is alive and flipping...

The off-duty policeman who shot a video store customer over a copy of Jet Lee's *Fist Of Legend* has been jailed for two and a half years.

TONG, TSANG AND BUTCHER WING WIN PRIZES

BUT NOT SURPRISES, AT THE HK FILM AWARDS



Mr and Mrs. Lau Kar-leung dressed to impress at the '97 H.K. Film Awards.

The 1997 Hong Kong Film Awards was more style than substance. This star-studdied annual gala, Hong Kong's equivalent of the Oscar ceremony, was even more predictable than usual, with one film, *Comrades, Almost A Love Story*, scooping most major prizes, and the same performer, Shu Kei, winning Best Newcomer and Best Supporting Actress. As has become traditional, a Jackie Chan film, *First Strike*, won the Best Action award, with director Stanley Tong accepting on behalf of himself and the absent Chan. Eric Tsang, best-known for his role as a member of the *Lucky Stars* comedy team, won Best Supporting Actor (deservedly) for his surprisingly effective straight role as a Maggie Cheung's gangster boyfriend in *Comrades. Once Upon A Time In China's* Butcher Wing, the burley Ken Cheung, took home a Best Actor trophy for his performance as a veteran cop who suffers a nervous breakdown in *The Log*. The presenters included *Young And Dangerous* star Jordan Chan and veteran kung fu movie actor/director Lau Kar-leung. Chan, famous for playing Triad characters, showed that the pair had something in common when he screened clips of Lau, in his younger days, playing similar roles in black-and-white Cantonese thrillers.



The surviving stars of the Wong Fei-hung film series (l-to-r) Shek Kin, Cho Tat-wah and Sai Gwa-pao received Lifetime Achievement trophies at the 1997 Hong Kong Film Awards.

TECHNICIAN KILLED WHEN GOLDEN HARVEST STUNT GOES WRONG

A pyrotechnician died after an explosion staged for a forthcoming Golden Harvest actioner went tragically wrong. The production was shooting on location at a disused army barracks when the incident occurred. Initial police reports suggest that, as is standard practice in the local film industry, the line producer had acquired a permit to film on the location, but not to stage explosions. The movie concerned is an as-yet-untitled *Mission Impossible*-style thriller directed by newcomer Teddy Chen. The film's action director, Tung Wai, was in charge when the accident occurred. The film stars Taiwanese singer Takeshi Kaneshiro and local star Jordan Chan, neither of whom was injured.

DAUGHTER OF THE DRAGON TO BE DIRECTED BY *NO RETREAT'S* COREY YUEN



Shannon Lee kicks out against director Yuen Kuei.

Despite statements to the contrary, it looks like Shannon Lee will be following in the footsteps of her famous father Bruce when she makes her Hong Kong movie debut. Like her late brother Brandon, Shannon initially resisted attempts to turn her into a movie martial arts performer. However, recent photos in the Hong Kong press show her performing impressive high kicks opposite veteran action director Corey Yuen Kuei, in preparataion for her forthcoming Golden Harvest film. Yuen, who made his name internationally with *No Retreat, No Surrender 1* & *2*, has shot several female fury films, including the classic *Yes Madam*. He choreographed Samo Hung's wife, Joyce Godenzi, who was, like Shannon, a non-martial artist, in *She Shoots Straight*. Shannon steps (or leaps!) before the camera later this year.

A Fistful of Yuens

Bey Logan checks out *Hero*, the latest action offering from the once mighty Shaw Brothers studio.



Taiwanese/Japanese heartthrob Takeshi Kaneshiro.

If you met Yuen Biao on the street, you might be justified in observing that he used to be big in movies, and he might justifiably respond, quoting Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard*, "I AM big. It's the movies that got small." As far as recent Hong Kong offerings go, *Hero* is about as big as you could hope for, shot on mainland Chinese locations with a cast of thousands, star turns from Takeshi Kaneshiro and Valerie Chow, and the performance of a lifetime from the aforementined Biao. This is an epic in the grand tradition of Chinese action film-making, a movie that paints its tale on the screen in such bold and bloody colours that even veteran Shaw's director Chang Cheh would approve. It's almost too magnificent for a local market that's seen its industry down-sized to cheapo horror and gangster flicks, and *Hero* might be best appreciated in West rather than East.



Takeshi Kaneshiro walks the walk as the new Boxer From Shantung.

The film is a much-expanded remake of 1972's *Boxer From Shantung*, which starred Chen Kuan-tai as a country boy martial arts master who makes bad in the big city of Shanghai. Chen's role, that of Ma Wing Jing, is played by Taiwanese/Japanese singing idol Takeshi Kaneshiro (Gum Sing Mo).

After a severe drought hits Shantung, Ma and his feckless brother Tai Cheung (Yuen Wah), head for 'the Paris of the East'. It's 1911, and the city is divided up by the foreign powers, the same bigots who erected the 'No Dogs Or Chinese' sign Bruce Lee encounted in *Fist Of Fury*.The only work the Ma brothers can find is as dockside coolies. There, Ma Wing Jing encounters gang boss Tam See (Yuen Biao). After the pair engage in a duel, mutual respect follows, though the proud Ma declines Tam's offer of a place in his outfit.





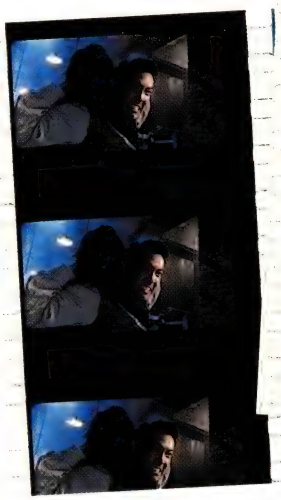
Subsequently, Ma saves Tam from the henchmen of rival crimelord Yang Shuang

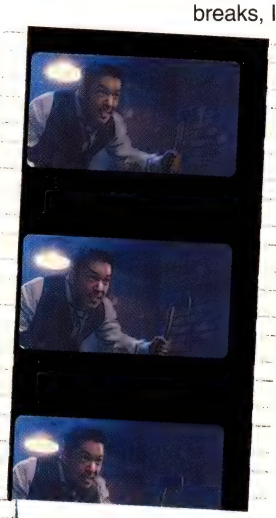


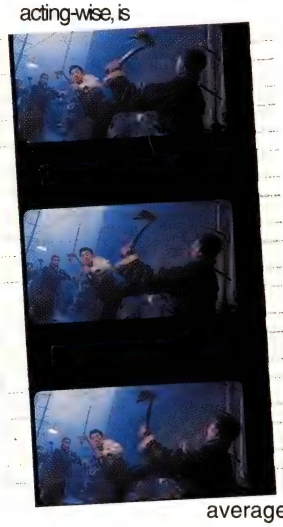
Kaneshiro and Yuen Wah ride the rails in Hero.

(Yuen Tak). As a reward, Tam gives him control of the nightclub run by femme fatale Yam Yeung Tien (Valerie Chow). Yam carries a mile-high, unrequited torch for Tam. Ma falls in love with an innocent nightclub singer (perhaps a contradiction in terms) named Kim Lin Tze (Hsuan Jessica Hester), but, before their relationship can develop, she and her father (Yuen Kuei) leave town. As Ma rises to rule his own territory, he embarks on a brief affair with Yang, who is very much on the rebound from Tam. Finally, Ma's ennui proves to be his downfall, and, after a protracted bloody showdown with Yang's henchmen, he finally falls from a bridge and is presumed dead. When he arrives to rescue his former friend, Tam is shot down and subsequently jailed by Yang Shuang, while Yam is raped and disfigured. (As you may have ascertained, it's not a comedy.)

Naturally, matters are set right in a suitably explosive finale, which features dynamite, gunplay and the expected kung fu showdown between the Yuens Biao and Tak that the audience demand. In the end, it is Tam who makes the final sacrifice, underlining the ultimate irony of the title, in that the central character, Ma Wing Sing, is actually anti-*Hero*-ic.









The film might well have been subtitled *Return Of The Seven Little Fortunes*, as it spotlights the talents of no less than four of Jackie Chan's Peking Opera school classmates: Yuen Kuei behind (and in front of) the camera, Yuen Wah as Tai Cheung, Yuen Biao as Tam See and Yuen Tak as Yang Shuang. As director, Yuen Kuei (a.k.a. Corey Yuen) provides his most cohesive film to date. Finally, we have a movie from him that's uniform in its style and scope. *Hero* captures the flavour of bygone Shanghai with a flair that puts it on a par with similar, earlier offerings like *Shanghai Triad*, *Lord Of The South China Sea* and *Shanghai Grand*. Against this vast vista, Yuen Kuei crafts a tale told with sound and fury, with larger than life characters and action set-pieces. Yuen Wah's career arc has been truly extraordinary. From jug-eared stuntman and bit part player, he has evolved into the consummate Hong Kong character actor, with his earlier physical grace now replaced by the dexterity of a truly skilled thespian. As the gawky Tai Cheung, Yuen Wah provides an admirable foil for Kaneshiro's Ma Wing Sing. He also supplies Chinese cinema with a fresh comedic double act when he shares screen time with Yuen Kuei.

Yuen Tak, previously a B player in various Shaw Brothers films, is transformed into a lethal villain rather reminiscent of Yuen Wah's role in *Eastern Condors*.

Finally there's Yuen Biao, who sheds his kung fu kid image to provide a performance of real maturity. Though he still supplies a taste of his trademark martial artistry, it's the pathos of his role, that of a man doomed by his honour, just as Ma seems doomed for lack of it, which stays in the mind. The final shot of Tam raises Yuen Biao, literally and figuratively, to mythic status.

Set against this vast array of experience is Takeshi Kaneshiro, a wonderfully instintive young actor, previously used to best effect in Wong Kar-wai's *Chunking Express* and *Fallen Angels*. Action fans will remember him from his co-starring turn in Samo Hung's *Don't Give A Damn*. Unfortunately, his teen idol status has meant that Kaneshiro has also appeared in a slew of inferior B flicks, thereby diluting his star quality with quantity. In *Hero*, he has the looks and styles of a 1930s Hollywood movie star, and, given the right breaks, I think he could do well in an international feature.

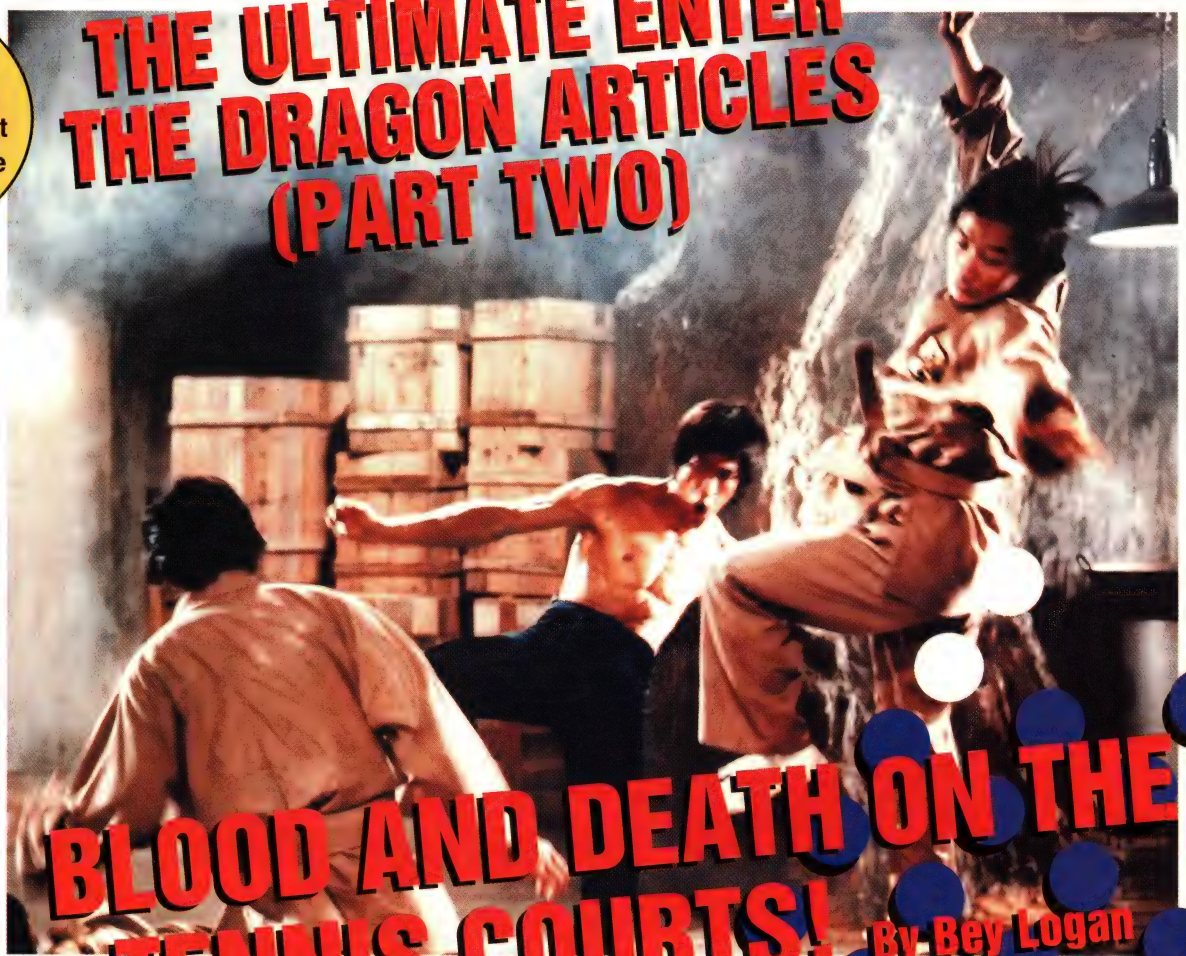
The film's real revelation, acting-wise, is Valerie Chow Kar-ling, formally window dressing in a number of average local productions, including Jet Lee's *High Risk* and the ghastly *Red Zone*. Here she is given a real rarity of a role, a complicated female part in a Hong Kong action flick. She begins the film flawless without but scarred on her soul, and is finally disfigured without but redeemed within. The only downside to her performance is that her linguistic limitations make her lip-sync of a mandarin love song painfully false! By comparison with Chow's Yam Yeung Tien, Hsuan Jessica Hester, in the 'good girl' role is infinitely less interesting.

Hero was actually filmed in 1995, but delayed for two years while Shaw Brothers tried to find a cut that satisfied the mainland Chinese censors. (As the movie was shot on location in China, the government had final say on the release version.) Happily, for once, the censorship process seems only to have enhanced the finished project. *Hero* was well worth the wait.



All the things you ever wanted to know about the greatest martial arts movie ever made.

THE ULTIMATE ENTER THE DRAGON ARTICLES (PART TWO)



BLOOD AND DEATH ON THE TENNIS COURTS!

By Bey Logan

At the time *Enter* was filmed, Mr Lo and his wife lived in a big house (which still stands) overlooking the courts. They used to venture onto the set to invite Shek Kin to visit them for tea and cakes. The Los had seen 'Kin Suk' ('Uncle Kin') in his many Cantonese movie appearances, but had little idea who Bruce Lee was! Lee used to tag along with Shek Kin and the elderly couple to take a break from filming. During the shooting of the tournament scenes. Lee became concerned with the poor quality of the lunch boxes provided for the stuntmen and other cast members. He used his star power to get an extra portion of 'char siu' (barbecued pork), which he would then distribute liberally among his fellow workers.

Han's tournament was staged at the Lo property, off Tai Tam Road on Hong Kong island. The Los were prominent local lawers ('Lo & Lo'), and had a number of tennis courts on their land. The chalk lines of the courts areclearly visible during the tournament scenes. Today, most of the location has been covered by a massive leisure structure, The American club. however, several tennis courts remain, as do the distinctive sandstone walls that ringed the property, and the steps up which Lee and the rest of the competitors climb from the boat to Han's fortress.

The exterior used to depict Han's palace is not the Lo house, but rather an imposing structure situated near to Hong Kong Island's Aberdeen Harbour. The building is also visible in the 1955 Clark Gable film *Soldier Of Fortune*.

Tony Liu Yung, who played John Saxon's opponent, had been discovered by director Lo Wei. Liu, known in Cantonese as Lau Wing, was already part of a show business family, his mother having been a famous screen star, and had been a karate enthusiast since his youth. He made his debut in *The Big Boss*, and is the only performer to have appeared in all four of Lee's completed films. Prior to the shooting of *Enter the Dragon*, Lee entrusted Liu with making sure that Saxon got to work out prior to the shooting of their fight scene. It was Saxon's first time in Hong Kong, and Liu became his first local Chinese friend. Schedules permitting, the pair spent two hours a day training at the Kowloon YMCA gym prior to the filming of their fight scene. After Lee's death, Liu went on to work for the mighty Shaw Brothers studio. He still looks great, and is currently starring in a television series for TVB.

The land around the tennis courts, now covered by high-rise residential blocks, was then wild countryside. Hikers used to cross the hills, peering down with curiosity at the kung fu-ery on display below. During breaks in the filming, the dozens of extras employed for the tournament scenes would wander off to sleep under the trees. One day, a group of them found the dead body of a young woman. The police were called, and filming suspended while everyone was questioned. It was during this enforced break that Lee received one of the most memorable of his challenges. Some of the extras were sitting on top of a small gardener's hut that stood on the land. One of them jumped down, and demanded to see how good Lee really was. Bruce suggested that the challenger be allowed to hit him three times, while he would only be allowed to strike once. Lee then evaded his attacker's blows, before landing one of his own. The extra suffered a split lip and lost some teeth.



The story about how Bruce Lee cut his hand at the end of his duel with Bob Wall has become the stuff of legend. Witnesses relate that Lee told Wall that he was going to kick his wrist, at which point he should drop the broken bottle. Then Lee would punch him. However, when they were shooting the scene, Wall claimed that, perhaps because the sleeve of his gi was so wide, he did not feel Lee's kick. As a result, Wall held onto the bottle, which was made of real glass, with the result that, when Bruce continued with his punch, the jagged edge of the makeshift weapon stabbed deep into his knuckle. Director Robert Clouse asked if Lee could continue, and Bruce, furious at getting injured, thrust his bloodied fist under the American's nose. "Like this?" Lee was rushed to Hong Kong's Adventist Hospital, where the wound received multiple stitches. It would take almost three weeks for the cut to heal sufficiently for Bruce to continue.

When Lee returned to complete the scene, there were rumours on the set that he planned to 'accidently' kill Bob Wall. Originally, Lee meant to end his duel with Ohara with a punch. However, as his fist was still wrapped in a surgical glove, his finishing move was changed to a kick. The shot prior to that, in which Lee sidekicks Wall into the onlookers, was actually shot afterwards. According to witnesses, Bruce insisted that Bob Wall wear a pad on his chest and then made sure that, for the first few takes, he kicked Wall everywhere **except** the area that was padded. After each take, he would ask the assembled Chinese stuntmen and extras, in Cantonese, "Is that enough?" Bob Wall himself admits that Lee 'got him back' with these kicks.

The interior of Han's hidden fortress, toured by Shek Kin and John Saxon, and later invaded by Lee, was constructed in the Golden Harvest soundstages. The comatose female drug addict Han is keeping prisoner was Diane Power, the receptionist at the Bottoms Up Club (made famous by its appearance in the 007 film *Man With The Golden Gun*), one of an eclectic band of Hong Kong residents employed on the film. The radio operator seen typing out Lee's SOS message is actually one of the producers, Paul Heller. The scene was shot at the secretary station just outside of Raymond Chow's office.

In the cavern fight sequence, Lee takes on most of his regular stunt team, all of whom went on to successful careers in the Hong Kong film industry. The very first guard to attack Bruce is played by Yuen Wah, he doubled Lee for two 'flip' scenes, one after his fight with Samo, the other during his duel with Bob Wall. Yuen Wah is also visible as the sourpuss guest who catches an apple during the banquet scene. Originally a member of the Seven Little Fortunes Peking Opera team (which also gave the world Jackie Chan, Samo Hung and Yuen Biao), Yuen worked his way up from being a stuntman to working as a supporting player and, finally, a gifted character actor. He's probably best-known, internationally, for his role as the demented, giggling, kung fu fighting Vietnamese commander in *Eastern Condors*.



The first guy Lee jumps up to stomp on is Lam Ching-ying, who also doubled for Shek Kin during Bruce's final duel with him. (He's visible setting up the hall of mirrors scene with Lee in the *Location: Hong Kong* feature on *Enter*.) Another former Peking Opera student, Lam was a prolific stuntman and supporting player throughout the 70s, finally getting a chance to shine in Samo Hung's masterpiece, *Prodigal Son*. Lam later found fame as the star of the *Mr. Vampire* films and TV series.

The next guard, who runs out and points at Lee, nunchakus in hand, is Zebra Pan ('Ban-ma Jai'). He worked as a stuntman and supporting player throughout the 70s, and is currently an action director. (He actually choreographed my fights in the infamous *Circus Kid*!) The fellow with the squinty eyes and gap teeth who grabs Lee from behind is, of course, the young Jackie Chan! (Chan also plays the guard who dives into Han's acid bath after a whack from Lee's nunchakus.) The guy who watches, spellbound, as Bruce twirls his nunchakus is Chan Wui-ngai ('Ah B'). Ah B and his brother, Peter Chan ('Mao Gu') were regular members of Lee's stunt team, from *Big Boss* onwards. (Peter Chan plays one of Han's henchmen in the exterior tournament sequences.) Though Peter is now retired from the indutry, Chan Wui-ngai still works as an action director.

At the very end of the sequence, we cut to Braithwaite (the late Geoffrey Weeks) receiving Lee's message while lying in bed. The scene was shot in a room at Nathan Road's Hyatt hotel. (Weeks worked on *Enter The Dragon* for only three days, one on location at Castle Peak temple and two at the Hyatt.)

The script demanded that the film end with an army unit arriving, just after the nick of time. Production manager Madalena Chan was sent to the British army barracks to arrange it, while she waited one of the officers there contacted the Ministry Of Defence back in the U.K. The MOD declined to supply soldiers and equipment for the production. The redoubtable Chan asked Diane Power (see above) for help, and she suggested using American serviceman enjoying shore leave. (The American fleet did, and does, dock its ships in Hong Kong harbour.) Having found enough U.S sailors, Madalena returned to the British barracks to find out if they could lend her some British army uniforms. Luckily, the British forces agreed, and so American forces, clad in these borrowed robes, got to invade Han's island.

Next month: Shek Kin almost kills Bruce Lee!: The finale of our *Enter* overview.

WHO'S WHO IN BATMAN AND ROBIN.

BACK TO

An Impact rundown of the latest residents of Gotham City

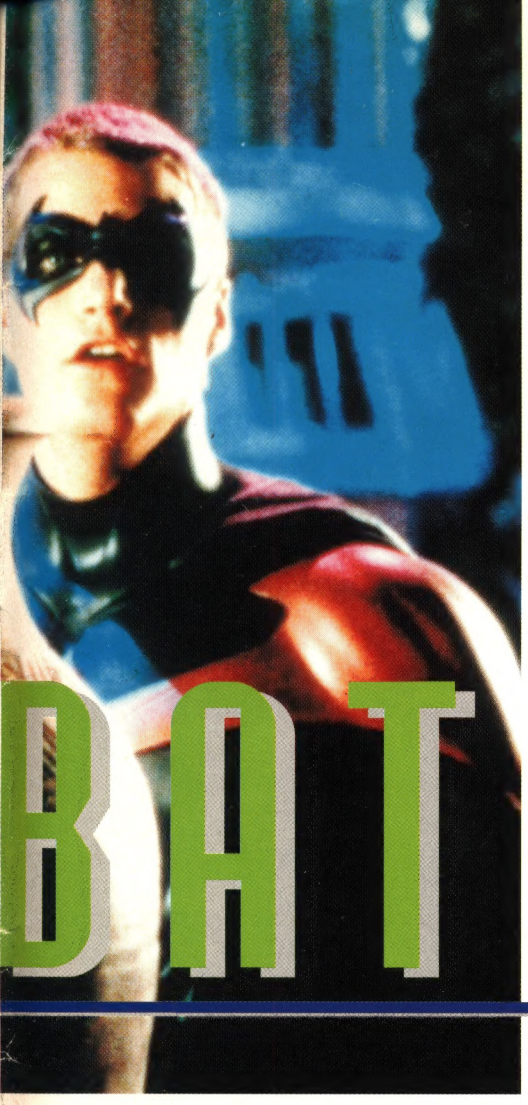
Batman/ Bruce Wayne: George Clooney

Clooney is the big screen's fourth Batguy, following the caped careers of Adam West, Michael Keaton and Val Kilmer. Director Joel Schumacher, who directed Kilmer in *Batman Forever*, has publicly expressed his satisaction that the allegedly temperamental star elected not to return to the series, deciding to make *The Saint* instead. Apparently, one of the bones of contention between Warners and Kilmer, who was contracted to make a second Batman flick, was the fact that his caped crusader skates in the film. (Kilmer is rumoured to have said that he'd be delighted to return to the Batman series, but only as a villain!) When asked to comment about Kilmer's replacing Keaton, and Clooney's replacing Kilmer, Batman director Tim Burton observed that it might be interesting if a different actor played Bats in each new movie! The lantern-jawed Clooney, star of TV *E.R.* and big screen's *From Dusk Till Dawn*, beat *X-Files* heart-throb David Duchovny for the role. Duchovny quipped that his nose was too big for the mask. Clooney brough his own concerns to the set, insiting on total secrecy (backed up by vigilant Warner Brothers security staff). In several high-profile incidents, people sneaking onto the backlot to grab photos of Clooney in the batsuit were detained, and their film seized. Clooney, last seen in the romantic *One Fine Day* opposite former Catwoman Michelle Pfeiffer, also insisted on certain restrictions with regard to the marketing of his name and image. Thanks to Clooney, you won't be seing a Batman toilet cleanser any time soon. The redesigned Batsuit seen in the new film was so hot that Clooney needed air pumped into it between takes. Incidentally, an alternative title to Batman 4, Batman Triumphant, was previously banded about. This was the name of one installment of Frank Miller's recently re-released Dark Knight Returns graphic novel.



Robin/Dick Grayson Chris O'Donnell

The screen's first Robin since Burt Ward returns to the fray, but minus the earring. (His mum didn't like it...) He retains the haircut though. The original comic book Robin outfit made a fleeting appearance in *Batman Forever* (as the Grayston family circus costume), before being traded in for a more dark and dashing suit. In the new film, Robin gets an outfit very similar to the one sported by the latest incarnation of Robin, now known as Nightwing, seen in the current DC Batman books. Since *Batman Forever* launched him to heart-throb status O'Donnell has focused on tougher, dramatic pieces, including the big-screen version of Tom Clancy's *The Chamber*.



BAT

silver paint and a suit reminiscent of a bulked up vesion of the *Wizard Of Oz* Tin Man. At the time of writing, The Austrian Oak is recovering from a heart operation intended to correct a genetically defective valve prior to embarking on the worldwide *Batman And Robin* publicity tour.

Poison Ivy/ Uma Thurman

The *Pulp Fiction* femme fatale fought out tough competition, including Julia Roberts and Demi Moore for the role. (There were also rumours that Roberts wanted to play Batgirl in both this film and a spin-off movie). Even after she signed, there were apparently conflicts with Thurman over the script. Julianne Moore and Kate Winslet were considered possible replacements for Thurman if she walked.



There's also a sequence in which she engages fellow heavy metal freak Robin in a road race.

Julie Madsen? Elle Macpherson

Macpherson plays the latest in the line of ill-fated Bat-love interests. Julie falls foul of Poison Ivy, who has her own plans to entwine Batman. The Body made her acting debut in the Australian film *Sirens*.

Bane / Jeep Swanson

In the film, the Bane character is Poison Ivy's hulking bodyguard, whereas, in the Batman comic book Knightfall series, he was an independent super villain in his own right, one who succeeded in breaking the Bat's back. Early reports had Lou Ferrigno pegged for the part. Unlike his comic book counterpart, the big screen Bane is mute.



Mr Freeze / Arnold Schwarzenegger

Action hero becomes action figure as the larger-than-life Arnold tackles his first book character. Arnie apparently viewed all the Mr.Freeze episodes of the Batman TV series, in which famed movie director Otto Preminger played the role, in preparation for the film. Schwarzenegger's casting came as something of a surprise, after early reports had Star Trek star Patrick Stewart locked into the role. One bizarre story had Sly Stallone offering his services if Arnie became unavailable. Arnold donned a bald cap for the role, along with

Batgirl? Alicia Silverstone

The curvaceous Alicia apparently hit the gym with a vengeance, losing 20 pounds prior to donning her form-fitting Batsuit. Word had it that Alyssa Milano was the stand-by Batgirl in case *Clueless* star Silverstone didn't lose the requisite weight. In the original comics, the Batgirl character was Commissioner Gordon's daughter, Barbara. Here, she's Barbara Wilson, the niece of Bruce's butler Alfred, a proper British schoolgirl who is secretly a biker chick. Word is that the introduction of batgirl's character will allow for further affectionate references to the campy 60s TV series. At one point, she sings Batgirl to the series theme tune, and, during one fight scene, amits cries of Pow! Biff! Bash!

Mrs.Freeze / Vendela Kireborn:

So that's her name...Supermodel Vendela plays Arnie's other half, Mrs.Freeze, in *Batman And Robin*.

Commissioner Jim Gordon / Pat Hingle

Hingle is one of only two veteran thespians to have appeared in the same role in all four Batman flicks.

Alfred Pennyworth / Michael Gough

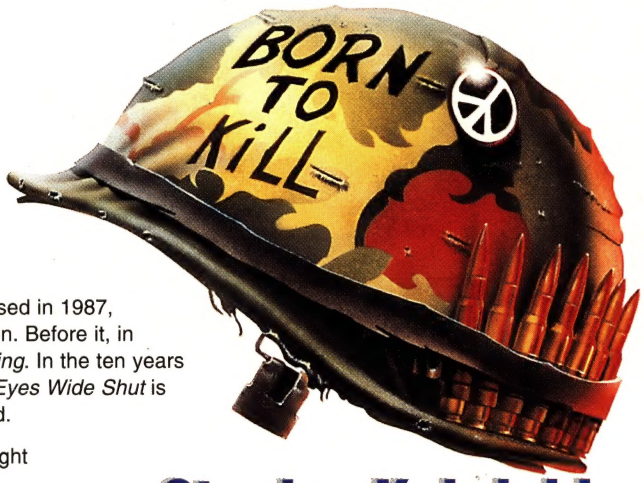
Gough is the other one.

The ones that got away

The rumour had Michelle Pfeiffer fulfilling her contractual obligations to Warner Bros by making a Catwoman cameo... Howard Stern was once touted as The Scarecrow. He may still turn up in the as-yet untitled Batman 5... Ernest Borgnine was once mentioned in connection with the role of Harvey Bullock, the tough Gotham City lawman seen in the comic book and the Batman animated series... Other Batvillains that have yet to make the bigscreen include Killer Croc, Clayface and Manbat.

THE war was Vietnam. The star was director Stanley Kubrick.

Tony Earnshaw recalls the motion picture acclaimed across the world as "the finest anti-war movie ever made"...



Stanley Kubrick's FULL METAL JACKET

Stanley Kubrick is that rare creature in today's movie industry. He is an auteur. He takes years to conceive and plan a film, and then pursues his vision with a single-minded obession.

Full Metal Jacket, which was released in 1987, took eight years to get to the screen. Before it, in 1979, Kubrick had made *The Shining*. In the ten years since, he's made nothing, though *Eyes Wide Shut* is currently in production at Pinewood.

So *Full Metal Jacket* is a total of eight year's work - eight years of blood, sweat and tears which is up there on the screen in the performances of the actors and the utterly believable re-creation of the carnage of Vietnam shot, incidently, completely on location in the U.K..

Based on Gustav Hasford's novel *The Short-Timers*, *Full Metal Jacket* (named, if you weren't aware, after the skin of a bullet) is two stories rolled into one. The first half chronicles the dehumanisation of a bunch of raw recruits as they are turned into brainwashed automations - American Marines, killing machines - by a hard-as-nails drill sergeant (Lee Ermey).

The second half shows their various adventures in the killing fields of Vietnam, where the youth of America is wasted in the name of freedom and Uncle Sam in a war no-one wanted and which only the Vietnamese could win.



That, in a nutshell, is what *Full Metal Jacket* is about - the loss of innocence. The hapless recruits, led byMatthew Modine's Pvt Joker, are led to the front line of hell like children skipping happily after the Pied Piper. The moral message is stark: in war there is no honour, no heroes, and no redemption. War means death, either physical or spiritual. War = DEATH.



If the moral message isn't important to you, then soak up the bloodbath of the exultant action sequences, surely as dehumanising as the scenes in marine boot camp. Kubrick's direction is both linear and staccato, manipulative and coldly efficient. He lines up his victims with an executioner's eye, carefully colouring them in different shades of grey so the audience remains detached and uncaring. When they die, screaming in frenzied agony as bullets tear through their bodies, the imagery of war as hell on earth is slammed home like a sledgehammer.





Actor Matthew Modine, ostensibly playing the lead in the first-rate ensembled cast, revealed how Kubrick shot the entire movie in his head.



"Kubrick saw the movie as a whole. Stanley used one camera except where he was going to blow something up. With the bullet hits there'd be multiple cameras just in case one of the cameras had a scatch or it broke. So there'd be a close up, wide shot or medium shot."

Kubrick's intense and choreographed death sequences - for instance when an NVA sniper draws marines into her arc of fire and then drops them, one-by-one, to bring other soldiers running to the rescue - are stuningly bleak. The uncompromising power and horror of war is starkly laid out on a blood-red canvas. It's sickening. More importantly, it's a true picture, better than *Apocalypse Now*, more realistic than *Platoon*. It's raw.

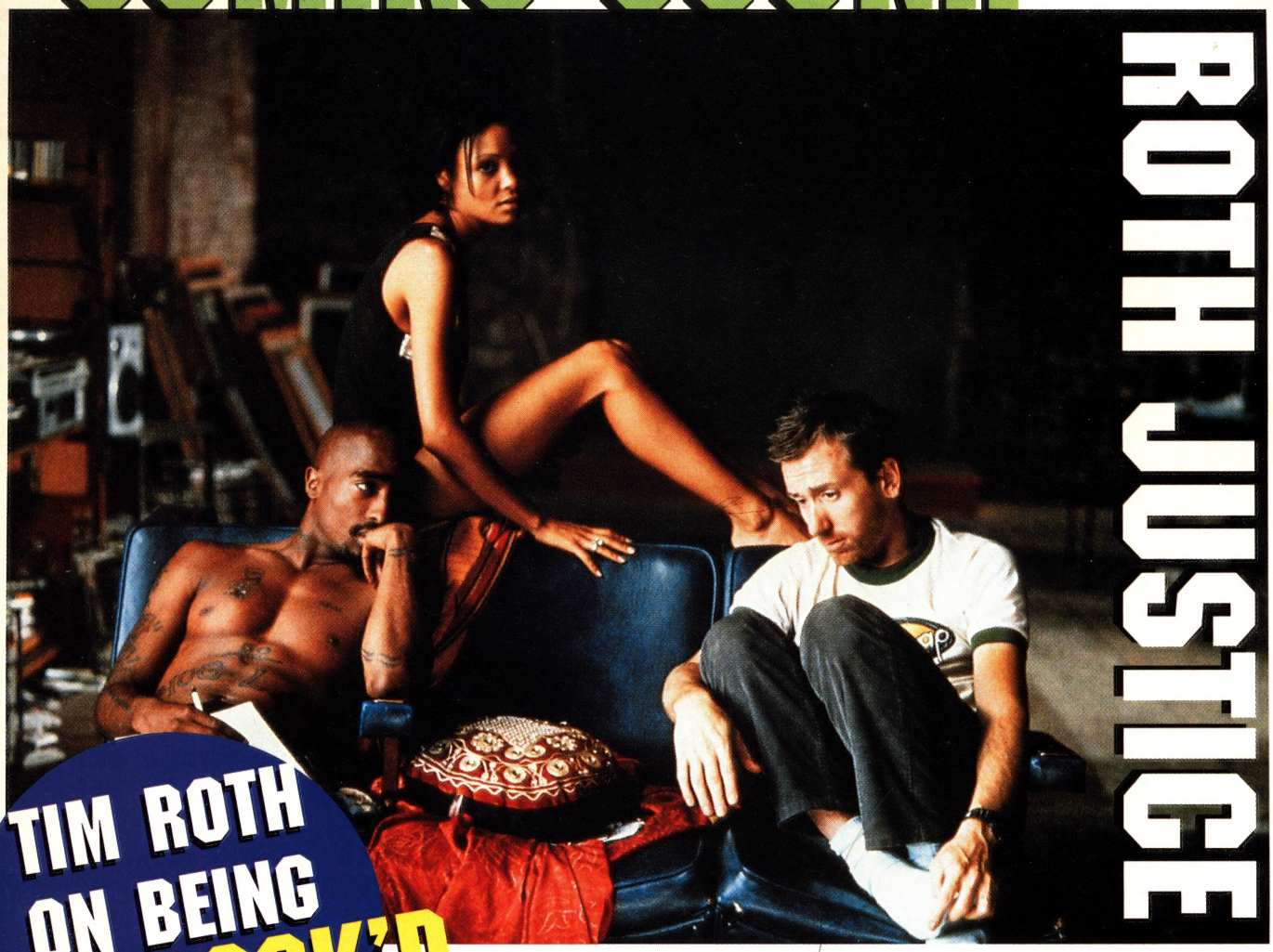
Full Metal Jacket's classic status among war movies - in fact, among any genre of movie - is in its performances and its script. Modine, Adam Baldwin (as a machine-gun toting meathead named Animal Mother) and Vincent D'Onofrio (as the gormless and friendless Pvt Pyle) are uniformly excellent, though they are obviously working to Kubrick's prescribed vision. In fact the finest perfomance comes from Lee Ermey as the chillingly realistic drill sergeant.

The script is tight, bright and littered with marine-talk. It's so real it's scary. When even the words in a war film are frightening, you know you're looking at The Real McCoy. And the words in *Full Metal Jacket* slam home like bullets.

In his five decades in film, Stanley Kubrick has made only twelve movies. Each one is a masterpiece of control, manipulation and, sometimes, subtle message communication.

Full Metal Jacket is all of that and much, much more. It is an astounding piece of motion picture art.

COMING SOON...



ROTH JUSTICE

TIM ROTH ON BEING GRIDLOCK'D

ONCE UPON A TIME IN HONG KONG
Van Damme joins Samo Hung, Tsui Hark and Jet Lee for *Knock Off*.

SHOU TWO
The finale of our exclusive interview with the *Mortal Kombat* star

BAD, BLACK AND BACK
Issac Hayes on scoring *Shaft*, blaxploitation flicks and the war against illiteracy.

IRON BODYGUARD
Behind-the-scenes on this no-holds-barred martial arts actioner.

SPEED 2
Boldly going where Keanu dare not tread.

'DRIVE', HE SAID
Getting our kicks on route action flicks with Mark Dacascos.

CON AIR
Nicolas Cage back in action flick flight.

DIRECTOR ON FIRE
Ringo Lam talks about the *Maximum Risk* of working in the West.

ENTER THE DRAGON
Part three of the 'Ultimate' article series.

THE REPLACEMENT KILLER
Impact goes on location for Chow Yun Fat's Hollywood debut.

CHINA BEAT RETRO
Lost classics from Hong Kong's Orson Welles, Samo Hung.

MICHAEL JAI WHITE IS *SPAWN*
Cult comic hits celluloid.

WESLEY SNIPES IS *BLADE*
Marvel's vampire hunter stalks the screen.

ALIEN RESURRECTION
Ripley's (believe it or not) return. Plus, 'Alien' myths revisited, lost scripts and unseen scenes.

HIGHLANDER ON DISC
Checking out the blade master on laser and CD.



FANTASY FLASHBACK

Conan The Barbarian

BOND EXHIBITION

John Mosby previews The World Of 007 on display at the Royal Armouries Museum

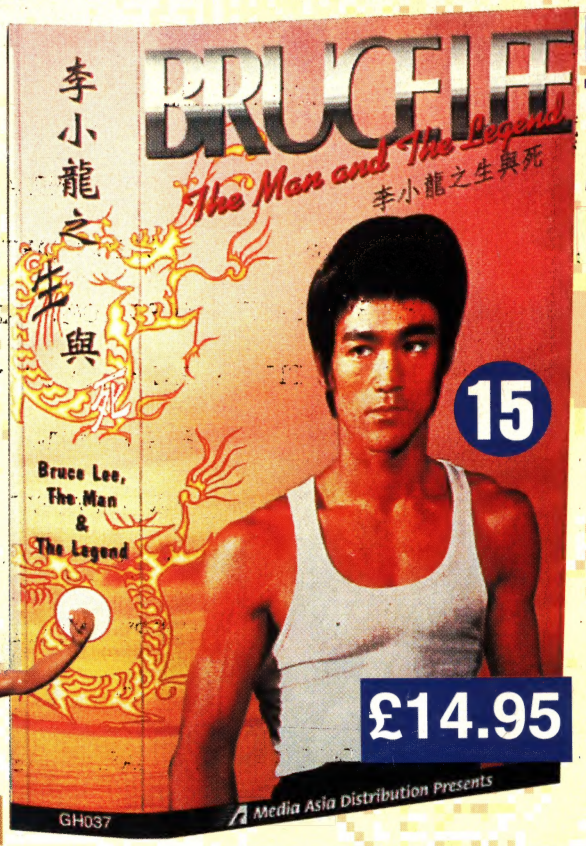
007

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BRUCE LEE, THE MAN AND THE LEGEND: LOST LITTLE DRAGON CLASSIC RE-RELEASED!

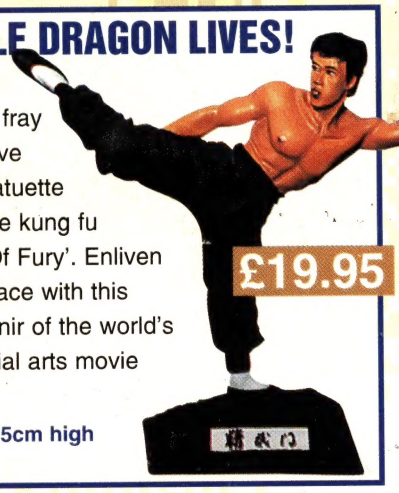
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